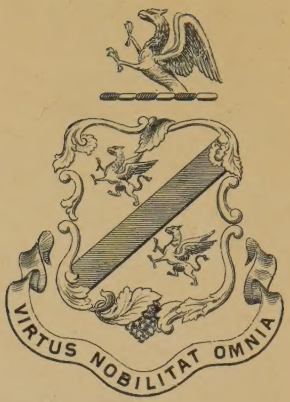
THE GREAT CHURCH AWAKES

BISHOP OF BOMBAY



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THE GREAT CHURCH AWAKES

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IDEAS AND STUDIES CONCERNING UNITY AND REUNION

BY

EDWIN JAMES PALMER, D.D.

SEVENTH BISHOP OF BOMBAY
SOMETIME FELLOW AND TUTOR OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to present a certain point of view about the Church which, as it appears to me, it is vital that every one should adopt who would really advance the cause of Reunion or of Church Unity. It is because this point of view has not, so far as I know, been pressed upon the Christian public of the present day, that I publish these chapters.

The first requisite of Reunion is a change of mind. This change of mind can only come if all of us adopt a new point of view. The new point of view is that of the Great Church. We must look at ourselves and the Churches to which we belong as we really are in the Universal Church, in the Body of Christ. We must try to see ourselves as Christ sees us. We must attempt to understand His idea of the Church which is His Body. We must attempt to trace His plans for the growth of His Body. For the former attempt we need prophetic vision, for the latter, calm and unprejudiced study of history. The chapters which follow are offered as specimens of attempts in both directions. I cannot hope that they are free from mistakes in fact or mistakes in reasoning. But I submit them as examples of the only method by which the cause of Reunion can be advanced. If we start from what we are, afraid to criticise others and resentful of criticism on ourselves, and attempt by diplomatic adjustment or mutual concession to patch up a League of Churches, we shall make bad worse. If we look at the Great Church and up to its

Divine Head, we may all be changed into conformity with His will.

Archbishop Laud has taught us to pray for the Universal Church that God may 'fill it with all truth, and in all truth with all peace.' I have set down nothing in this book primarily because it makes for peace, but only because, to the best of my judgment, it is true. Truth alone will make for permanent peace.

I have drawn few conclusions. I have not taken up the question of 'next steps.' I do not wish to enter the Lambeth Conference committed to a policy. When people come from the ends of the earth to a Conference, it is because they believe that in Conference they will gain what the Spirit of God does not give to persons in solitude, but does give to men meeting together in the name of Christ. We meet both to give and to receive counsel. We meet to combine together what the Spirit has taught to each. I hope this book contains some important prolegomena for the Conference.

But it is addressed to a much wider circle—to all Christians whom it can reach. It is an attempt to put before them the inner reality of the Reunion movement. This is not that one or other body of Christians is dissatisfied with its isolation or its feebleness: nor that we are all more or less concerned about waste of energy and of resources in competition. The reality is far deeper. It is that we are all feeling the movement of the Body of Christ. The prayer of our Head is beginning to have a new fulfilment. Limbs of His Body are stirring out of a long torpor. Sensation is succeeding paralysis. New prospects are floating before half-opened eyes. One member calls to another for renewed co-operation, because *the Great Church wakes.*

EDWIN JAMES BOMBAY.

BOMBAY,
Ascensiontide 1920.

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PART I

IDEAS

CHAPTER I

THE INDIAN BISHOPS' SYNODICAL LETTER

THE bishops of the 'Church of England in India,' as it is unhappily termed in legal language, met in February this year in their Episcopal Synod, and for three days of the fortnight clerical and lay representatives of their dioceses sat with them in what was called a 'Provincial Assembly.' Both bodies discussed the question of Church Unity, more particularly in reference to certain proposals for negotiations about union which had been received from the South India United Church. The bishops put out a Synodical letter on the subject of the Unity of the Church. This letter expresses some of the ideas which most need to be pressed upon all who consider this subject. It represents them, no doubt, from the Indian angle of vision, but that very fact may have an interest of its own to some readers, while it will not obscure for any the essential principles of the pronouncement. I reprint the Synodical letter here in full, because, while it expresses some of the chief ideas which I wish to put in the forefront of this book, it will have for my readers the much greater importance that it represents the united opinion of the whole Indian episcopate.

'We, the Bishops of the Province of India and Ceylon, think it right to address a Synodical letter to the faithful Clergy and Laity of the Province, conceiving that the present is a time of exceptional opportunity and difficulty.

'In many parts of the world, and not least in India, there is a great stirring of hearts concerning the disunion of Christendom. This is accompanied by more serious negotiations tending towards union, and also more definite proposals for Reunion than any living memory can recall.

'We would urge upon the Faithful first of all and at all times to remember the great spiritual facts which must govern all our thoughts upon this question. Of these facts the greatest is the desire of our Lord Jesus Christ. As He prayed on the last night of His earthly life, so now He intercedes in heaven. His words should be ever graven in our hearts: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me."[1]

'Our first and greatest desire should be to have our hearts right with His heart, to have them beating in unison with His. Let us lift our minds to that High and Holy Unity to which He in His prayer referred, the Unity which subsists between the Persons of the Blessed Trinity. High beyond our thought as that Unity may be, He has revealed to us somewhat about it which we can understand. He has revealed it as a Unity in glory[2] and a Unity in love.[3]

'The glory of the Godhead is indeed a light that none may approach unto, but yet it is a light that approaches us and giveth light to the world. And this power of giving light to the world He communicated to His Church, but the power is sadly diminished, so long as the unity is impaired. The love wherewith the Father loved the Son from the beginning, the Son gave to His Church. But the gift of love is also sadly restricted in operation, so long as the unity of the Church is impaired. For love feeds upon

[1] S. John xvii. 20–21. [2] S. John xvii. 22.
[3] S. John xvii. 26.

and grows by the deeds of love. But the deeds of love become more and more infrequent where disunion is. For with disunion arises competition and with competition jealousy and faction. And "where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." [1] Let us hear the voice of the beloved disciple saying unto us: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth." [2]

'Again, let us ever keep in mind that our Lord Jesus has called us into the Church which is His Body. Into that Body He has called with us all those that believe in Him. Let us never be content, let us never cease from prayer and effort, till all those who believe in the Lord are effectively one Body, acting in unity under the one Head, with all the diversities of operations which the one Spirit may inspire. One of the greatest purposes that can be set before us is to make this unity of the manifold Body not a matter of word or of profession but of deed and of truth. We must do our part to make this unity of the Body real, apparent and active.

'Nor is the way in which we can take our part in this great purpose obscure. We have been set not by any merit of ours but by God's great mercy in a wonderful heritage, the heritage of the traditions of the Holy Catholic Church. We have inherited this position through the Church of England. But we must not let our loyalty to her displace the higher loyalty which we owe to the Holy Catholic Church of which she is only a part, or rather a partial expression. Let us ever remember that we were received at Baptism not into the Church of England, but into the Church of God. At Confirmation we received the one Spirit of which all the baptised are made to drink. In the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord we receive the life which quickens the whole Church of God. Our Bishops, Priests, and Deacons are made at

[1] James iii. 16. [2] 1 John iii. 18.

their Consecration or Ordination, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons "in the Church of God." So run the memorable words of the services of ordination "according to the use of the Church of England." Here in India it more particularly behoves us to remember these things. At the first, indeed, clergy and laity of the Church of England came to this land as sojourners, and they ministered or were ministered to as members of the Church of England temporarily severed from her in place, but maintaining for themselves in a foreign land her worship and her ordinances. Very soon, however, they began to spread the Gospel among the inhabitants of the country, and then gradually a great change came over the position of our Church here. Its vocation became more and more apparent. That vocation is to plant the seed of the Holy Catholic Church in this land. Some may have thought that they were planting the Church of England here among the Indians. But surely that was a confusion of thought. The confusion was made more easy by the fact that we brought with us our Prayer Book and all the rules of the English Church and imposed them on our converts. Men did this because these forms of worship and rules were the best they knew, and in the early stages of missionary work, they had neither time nor knowledge to find better. But, if we think clearly, it must be apparent, that we have no right to offer to Indians, as a permanent condition, membership of the Church of England. We must offer them nothing else than membership of the Catholic Church, putting before them the prospect of the development of an Indian expression of all that the Catholic Church stands for. In a word, the sole legitimate aim of our missionary work is to plant the Holy Catholic Church in this land. It is for this that our Catholic heritage and our Catholic ministry have been given us.

'While these principles define the scope and purpose of our missionary work, they also determine the lines of our

action in the matter of Reunion. We do not invite bodies of Christians who are now out of communion with us to join the Church of England, but to join with us in realising better the Holy Catholic Church of God, in bringing into the fulness of its sacred activity the Body of Christ which is marred and paralysed by our divisions.

'We must never conceive of Reunion as the absorption of other communions into the Church of England. Far be that from our thoughts. Let us conceive of Reunion as the reawakening of the Great Church, the Universal Church, the Body of Christ, to a consciousness of itself and to an exercise of the power of the life which God has planned for it.

'And thus there can be no question of starting a new Church. Our task is to take part in renewing the one great Church and reviving its life of love. But we cannot take our part in this great renewal, this great reawakening, unless we feel a real penitence about our past; the blame for our disunion cannot lie only on others. Before we set about helping them to correct what is amiss, let us take to heart our Lord's warning about the beam in our own eye. Perhaps we miss seeing it because we have inherited so much that is good and we fail to observe our sins of omission. They may lie in several directions. We have not developed the ideal of service in our corporate life, and consequently our religious outlook suffers from a want of proportion, which alienates those to whom the service of man makes the most powerful appeal. We have not developed Catholic institutions on all the sides on which they are capable of development. Consequently, it has become difficult to us to find room for certain activities of the Spirit, and we have gone near to rejecting them as alien to the plan of God. Again, there are manifest failures of love. When people have separated from us, we have been too apt to become indifferent to their

proceedings, to leave them alone as if they no longer mattered to us.

'Now the call comes to us to consider very carefully and honestly the good things which the Spirit has wrought among them. In those good things we must recognise some of those works which the Lord wishes to be fulfilled in His Body. It is sometimes urged that these fruits of the Spirit justify the diversions of Christendom and certificate their ministries. We cannot accept such a plea. We repeat that we recognise gladly and freely that Jesus Christ has laid hold on many persons who, in the present state of the Church, are not in communion with each other. We recognise that His Holy Spirit has worked and works in them. But the "unity of the Spirit" and the "unity of the knowledge of the Son of God" are not reflected in the divided state of Christendom which groups these holy men and women into different and often competing companies of Christians. Because we recognise so clearly the good fruits of the Spirit in individual lives, we desire all the more earnestly to rediscover that form of association which will answer to the divine unity which is the source of all this human goodness. Once this outward unity is found, formed and consolidated, it will react on the inward unity of hearts which it expresses, and make it a still more real unity.

'We are unwilling at this time either to make any definite plans for Reunion or to put before you proposals to this end, since, in July, if God will, the Bishops of all the Churches in communion with us throughout the world will meet at Lambeth. We have appointed a small committee to meet a committee which has been appointed by the South India United Church, that in consultation with them we may learn more of their mind and they of ours. But we have made no official communication to them concerning terms of union and the like, and we shall take no official action till after the Lambeth Conference.

It is also our hope that a Provincial Council representing all the dioceses of this Province will shortly be formed, and, if it is formed, any proposals for corporate union will be formally submitted to it for the fullest consideration before they can take effect. Meanwhile we have addressed to you this letter both that you may know what general principles are guiding us in all that we do, and also in order that we may put them before you as the principles which should guide all your thoughts in this matter. Let us all pray that we may have the mind of Christ, and that all that we say and do may bring nearer the fulfilment of His prayer, and give joy to His heart.'

CHAPTER II

ATMOSPHERE

THE discussions at Calcutta, both in the Synod and at the Provincial Assembly, reached their highest point of interest when they touched the question of unity. At the same time there seemed to be a real difference of atmosphere between these discussions and the reports which reach us from England. At Calcutta I was impressed anew by the sense of reality and spontaneity in the movement towards unity. When one heard the Bishop of Dornakal and the other Indian representatives from the South speak of it, one felt that with them it was not a matter of theory, or of policy, or of artificial adjustment. It was a demand of the soul and it was a call of the blood. When one heard the Bishop of Chota Nagpur describe what he had seen and heard among the Eastern Churches, especially if one was able, as I was, to compare it with what those who know were saying in England last summer about the Churches of Russia and Greece, one felt again that here was a movement far wider and deeper than the conclusions of thinkers or the aspirations of leaders. No doubt part of its cause is that men in desperate straits are reaching out hands for succour and support. But it is also the discovery of a kinship in belief and spiritual experience. Compared with either of these movements, the movement towards unity in England is of the few, and not of the many. However deep and sincere are the aspirations of its leaders, they are so far in front of the

mass of Church-goers and Chapel-goers, that the movement still produces on many minds an impression of artificiality. It is consequently opposed by methods and arguments which in their turn have an air of unreality. It will be a great mistake if those in India whose spiritual pabulum consists of the English Church newspapers reproduce the arguments which they find in them in the different circumstances of India. For the movement towards unity here is a popular movement, not a movement of leaders. It concerns not the adjustment of Christian forces, but the birth-throes of the Church of India.

Whenever I hear the South Indian movement described by those Indians who are really in it, my mind goes back to the sacred words, 'A rushing mighty wind.' I heard that wind (as it were afar off) long ago in England. I heard it sounding nearer when I was there last year. But here it fills all the house where we are sitting.

As I said at the Provincial Assembly, there is one experience of my life of which I am very forcibly reminded. One afternoon in 1918 we were sitting in our house-boat on the Jhelum when suddenly far away we heard an unknown sound. Gradually it came nearer, whistling down the interminable poplar avenue. Dust and leaves began to scurry towards us. We looked on to see what would happen. But the Kashmiri servants rushed to shut every door and window, for the *tophan* was upon us. We must beware lest we act like those servants, and the moment we hear the whirlwind of the spirit of unity beginning to blow, close every door and window of our hearts. There is a great temptation to do it. The whirlwind will blow leaves from our boughs and pieces out of our house. But they are dead or dying leaves. They are doors that should never have been barred, or windows by shutting which we have stifled ourselves. The change will bring us discomfort. We shall have to change our

mind. We shall have to admit that we and our fathers have been wrong. We shall have to change our language. In proportion to the number and precision of our negations will be the number and pain of our recantations. But we shall be taught of God, if we will but listen, if we will be humble and teachable. Let us bow the head in awe and wonder, it may be even in amazement, that one day we may raise it in understanding and joy.

So much I said in the Provincial Assembly at Calcutta, but I believe there is more to be said. Our duty is not one of puzzled submission and passive learning. The wind drives. We must go whither it drives us. We may be blown over. But at least let us not be blown over because we stand still, stubbornly resisting. Let it be because, hurrying before the wind, we stumble and fall. Then the timorous and obstructive will mock us, or wisely shake the head, as they shake it over the Bishop of Madras' charge. But in a new and untried road mistakes must be made. Only those will make no mistakes who will sit still. But they will turn out to have made the greatest mistake of all. For whither the Spirit was to go, they went not. Those who went, and went wrong, and fell, the Spirit will raise up and set right and hurry forward again. But with those who will not go He can do nothing.

There are some who are exasperated by such language. 'Every religious crank,' they say, 'has claimed to be inspired. We do not accept the Seventh Day Adventists or the hundred and one freak missions which distract the mission field. We cannot be impressed by this claim. It is—or may be—a blasphemous imposture like so many others.' The argument is the same in kind as that of my Indian servant, who refused to go to hospital because 'most of the people who go to hospital die there.' But I am quite ready to take up the challenge directly. 'Beloved, believe not every spirit,' says S. John, 'but

prove the spirits whether they are of God.' The inquiry is right and necessary. But in this case it need not be long. Our Lord told us about the Holy Spirit, 'He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.' That the wish, the longing, for unity is Christ's, His own prayer shows. We need not therefore be afraid that the spirit which is bearing us towards unity is not of God. On the other hand, this does not mean that every proposal for unity is according to the will of God. Our proposed next steps may be amiss, but that does not mean that the impulse is not from above.

The mighty wind of God is blowing upon us. That is our description of the atmosphere which we breathe to-day in the Church. But even those who will not accept that description will admit that there is palpably an atmosphere of excitement. Men are full of schemes and full of resistance to schemes. Some seem to believe that unity is almost attained, and have set to work to settle its details. Others, half believing these and greatly distrusting them, have been taken with panic. What we need is neither impetuosity nor fear. We need faith, and, above all, faith in the reasonableness of God, and the certainty that His Spirit can and will lead to what is true and reasonable if we will listen and follow. We want to have a wholesome distrust of formulæ. We need a continual consciousness that *something* must be wrong in the long history that has led us to this pass. We must be neither unwilling nor afraid to reconsider what we have taught or thought all our lives. We must not be scandalised if we are asked to give the reason for any practice, however ancient, or to defend any doctrine, however established. We shall emerge from this period of questioning knowing more about our religion than ever before. We must look steadily forward to the inclusive Church of the future. One obvious effect of our separations has been to cause a development of dispro-

portionate partial truth in each separated part of the Church. And disproportionate truth—truth unbalanced by complementary truth—is very near falsehood. It is quite futile to take any existing system of Christian truth and demand that the Church of the future must conform to it. The very fact of centuries of separation from the rest of Christendom has let in all these dangers of unbalanced development. This is the reason, on the doctrinal side, why the claim of Rome to insist on only one form of unity, the unity of absolute submission to her standards, is wrong. If we admit that she is wrong in pursuing such a course, the Church of England would be equally wrong in doing the like.

We require then an atmosphere of unprejudiced reconsideration. The object of this reconsideration must be to relate different parts of truth together, those parts which others have emphasised with those which we have emphasised.

Above all we need an atmosphere of reality. We must talk not about names but things, and not all things but the great things, the things of God. There is no way to get to reality but by going to God.

CHAPTER III

REALITIES

If we desire to find reality, we must find it in God. This applies to the movement towards unity as to everything else. Taking this principle as our guide, let us ask what makes the reality of the unity of Christ's body ?

1. *Christ, our life, is the source of the unity of His Body.*— Let us ask first, then, what is the bond by which our Lord binds together His body, or wishes to bind it together ? It ought to be obvious that the bond which binds together the body is not anything which the members do, but something which the vital centre of the body does. It is Christ, our life, Who alone can make our unity in Him. It is His grasp of us that makes us one. It is not our grasp of each other, our love for each other, nor even our love for Him, our grasp of Him, but it is, I repeat, His grasp of us. All our disunion is a denial of that primary fact. We like our fellow Christians so little, and dislike their opinions so much, that we cannot believe that He likes them. But *He loves them.* He holds them. He upholds them. He reforms them. He inspires them. He uses them. They glorify Him. They preach Him. They draw men to Him.

Those who are now most keenly working for unity are sometimes reproached with not taking any account of Christ's wishes, especially of what He manifestiy wished His Church to be like. To them this appears a strange misunderstanding of their mind. It is because their

whole mind is focussed on what Christ has done, and is doing, and obviously wants to do; on the power which He promised, on the unity for which He prayed, and on the glory of saving souls which He enables men and women to share with Him—it is precisely because of their preoccupation with Christ and the signs of His will and of His power that they do what they do and say what they say.

The whole motive of the unity movement is to give adequate outward expression to the unity which our Lord has Himself made by calling men and women and uniting them to Himself. That unity exists. The unity of the Spirit of which we have been made to drink exists. And S. Paul exhorts us to keep it, as a thing given and existing. The whole point is that our divisions misrepresent the divine facts. While we maintain them, we are acting against what Christ wants. He wants us, His members, to reflect the divine unity which subsists between the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

But that is not a bare unity; it is a unity of love. And it is there that our love for our Lord, and our love for the brethren in Him, come in as subsidiary bonds of the unity of His body, working with His own all-constraining love.

2. *Christ the Truth; His disciples fellow-learners.*— Our Lord is not only the Life, but also the Truth. Men have for ages conceived that a certain amount of apprehension of the truth is a necessary condition of being in Christ. And so they have set standards of truth to each other and excluded one another from fellowship if they rejected those standards. This has always been a very difficult business, partly because the honest attempt to obey S. Paul and to 'prove (or test) all things and hold fast that which is good' sometimes ended in mistakes of head which were not due to faults of heart or of will, partly because there is a species of assent to formulæ

which has no moral value whatever and consequently cannot be a moral bond of union. But its most fatal effect has been to spread the idea that truth is a series of statements. Really it is the active personal 'Word' of God. This observation leads us out once more in the same direction as before. Truth binds us together not so much because we apprehend it, but because Christ imparts it to us with Himself. He does this in the most different parts and methods. Necessarily we know in part, and also teach (or prophesy) in part. Our fellowship is most unlikely to be an identity of apprehension or an identity of teaching. It is a fellowship in the mystery of Christ. We who make up His body are all together telling different parts of the great secret of His grace which must be revealed to the world which it alone can save.

The holding and teaching of different but ultimately complementary parts of truth do not break this 'fellowship of the mystery.' What does break it is the holding and teaching of ideas which prevent the inflow of truth into us from the source of all Truth. For 'verily our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.' Rightly then the Council of Ephesus decided that nothing should be added to the creed of Nicaea, because the purpose of that formula was to exclude those and those only who held ideas which made it impossible for them to accept Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and to believe in the revelation which He had made of God.

So far as truth is concerned, we can have fruitful fellowship with anyone who is learning truth from the Truth, even if (or, as I would rather say, especially if) he is being taught different aspects of truth. The further ideas are from the centre, the greater is the chance that, though they seem different, they are really complementary. This is an additional reason why the fathers at Ephesus

were right in their decree, and the age of the Reformation was wrong in attempting to base Christian fellowship on long and detailed statements of faith. We need an enormous development of belief in the possible complementariness of apparently conflicting doctrines taught in the name of Christ by persons who in their life show signs of His spirit. For if Christ is the Truth, there will always be a connexion between the truth that comes from Him and His way and His life.

Thus we know in part, and our agreement consists in this, that it is *Christ* that we know in part, and nothing and no one else.

3. *Christ the Saviour; His disciples united as fellow-workers.*—Another real bond of our unity is to be common work with Christ the Saviour. He came that men might have life and have it more abundantly. We are to help to draw men to that source of life. He came to save. We are to help in bringing His salvation near to our generation. All this was by the will of God who sent His only begotten Son. Thus it is that S. Paul tells us that we are God's fellow-workers. We should all admit that in respect of exclusion from the fellowship only those things are taken into account which prevent a man from continuing to work with God, or, so far as we know, prevent God from working with or in him. But the essence of the fellowship is not in the avoidance of such things, but in the positive doing of the work. Aggressive energetic work with God has always been one of the strongest bonds of fellowship. That was one of the reasons why the Apostolic Church was so strong. It is our duty to remember that no one will be keen on uniting with a Church which has no distinctive, advancing, conquering work to show. 'If the salt have lost its savour, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.' Again, in work we are to be banded together as an army with the work distributed to different regiments, and different

ranks in the regiments. We work in part, or, as we all say now, we do our bit. And this means that we are happy that the next man's bit is different from ours.

4. *Christ brings us near to God: we are united as fellow-worshippers.*—After all, in the Church of England, we do not think nearly enough about fellowship in work, but we are nervously anxious about fellowship in worship. Here again our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, before it is, or can be, with each other. The first condition of fellowship in worship is to be sure that we are following the suggestions and instructions about worship which our Lord gave. We are apt to demand identity of theories about Eucharistic worship. Is that necessary or reasonable? Are we concerned ultimately with anything else except that we are one in trying to do what Christ told us, one in seeking Him where He offers Himself to us, one in finding Him or rather being found of Him? Found of Him, because His mercy, flowing out of the sacrifice of the new Covenant consummated on the Cross, through the Sacrament which perpetuates its memory and applies its merits, finds us as we in our turn stand beside that sacrifice, and claim that it is for us that it was and is offered by our great High Priest. And even if persons tell us that they do not know that they can say all that with heart and lips, yet come to Him because He bids them, may we not be sure that He is greater than their heart and knoweth all things and truly finds them? They have come to Him and He will in no wise cast them out. Is not the fellowship of worship really in Him who is worshipped, not in the method of worship nor in anything which we say about worship? The solution of every problem in religion and the cure of every defect in it is God-centredness and more and more concentration upon God.

5. *Christ the original of all functions in the Church.*—There can hardly be any more impressive way of coming

to see the realities of the Church's life than by tracing how our Lord is the source of all its attributes and the original of all its functions. For instance, every title of a 'Church officer' gains a sudden illumination by being found to be a title of Christ, and to signify that He has imparted some special function of His to that 'officer.'

As we proceed, we may find instruction in observing that some of these attributes and functions of Christ are given to the Church as a Body, some to its members equally, some to selected members to hold and exercise for the profit of all.[1] Thus we learn to distinguish an equality among the redeemed from their diversity as members. The equality has been the reason why Christianity insensibly and almost unconsciously has promoted democratic principles and institutions, and why some people in our day are tempted to call Christianity democratic. The diversity necessary for members is the only condition on which the Christians can ever be a body, and therefore the theory of a democratic Christianity has to be severely modified by the necessity that we should 'subject ourselves one to another in the fear of Christ,'[2] who is our Head.

We begin then by looking up to the only begotten Son of the Father, and remember that 'when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.'[3] There was the dire equality of sinners. 'The scripture hath shut up all things under sin.'[4] Now that 'the promise by faith has been given to them that believe,' there is the joyful equality of the redeemed, the equality of the adopted sons.

Then we remember that the only begotten Son was the suffering servant. He came 'not to be served, but

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 7.
[2] Eph. v. 21.
[3] Gal. iv. 4.
[4] Gal. iii. 22.

to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.'[1] So all the sons are called to serve: 'through love,' they are to be 'servants one of another.'[2] The only ambition allowed them is to be 'slave of all.'[3]

One of the words for servant—*Diakonos*—which is connected with the verb employed in the famous text just quoted[1]—came to be the title for an office in the Church. But this specialisation does not hinder the word and its cognates from being applied to the Apostles, as their Master would have wished, and to nearly every other Church officer mentioned in the New Testament.

S. Peter[4] and S. John[5] apply a description of the old Israel to the new, 'Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of Priests and an holy nation.'[6] In Exodus the word 'kingdom' is, as Dr. Hort says, 'little more than a synonym of people or nation with the idea of government by a king added.' So the original meant a people governed by a king, all of whom were priests. This is not the usual meaning of kingdom in the New Testament, and S. Peter turns the phrase, 'a royal priesthood,'[4] that is, a priesthood belonging to a king. Then S. John gives it a different turn by adding, 'and they shall reign upon the earth.'[7] This kingship comes from Christ, the Messianic King. And when He said to the Apostles, 'I appoint unto you, as my Father appointed unto me, a kingdom,'[8] the word should probably be taken, as usually in the New Testament, for 'sovereignty' or kingship. The Messianic King imparts His sovereignty to His most representative followers. They are to be judges in the new kingdom, as kings in Israel had ever been. But the essence of kingship, as He understood it, was to bear witness to the truth, as He told Pilate.[9] It is not only judges or law-givers who can do that. Every true disciple

[1] Mark x. 45. [2] Gal. v. 13. [3] Mark x. 44.
[4] 1 Peter ii. 9. [5] Rev. i. 6 and v. 10. [6] Ex. xix. 6.
[7] Rev. v. 10. [8] Luke xxii. 29. [9] John xviii. 37.

of the truth can bear witness to the truth, and, in his measure, exercise kingship.

Christ is also the 'high-priest of our profession.'[1] We have seen that His kingdom consists of priests, as did the ancient Jewish kingdom. The old Israel was, compared with other nations, a priestly people. But in the old Israel it is patent that the Levites, as the priestly tribe, were more concerned with priestly work than the bulk of the people, and again, the priests, the sons of Aaron, were priests in a much more special sense than the Levites. Thus, it would have seemed unnatural to any Jew, such as S. John or S. Peter, to interpret the priesthood of all Christians in such a sense as excludes the special priesthood of some. So that here again the Church has come to recognise that, while to some of the people of God are given special duties in regard to the offerings by the whole Church of its sacrifices, its prayers, its thanksgivings, and its gifts, the whole Church stands behind its 'ministerial priesthood' and offers with them, as they offer in its name. There is also the priesthood of the whole body, because it is the body of the one Priest who fulfills all Priesthood. The Church with and in Christ as the Priestly nation gives itself for the world. There is also at the other end of the scale the priesthood of the individual member, who with, in, and through Christ offers his own body as a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice to God.

So far we have been following attributes of Christ which He has imparted to His Church, either equally to all the members, or collectively to the whole Church, or in one sense equally and in another unequally to the members. Now we pass to other attributes of which we are informed definitely that they are imparted to the members unequally.

Christ is prophet. Some of His members are prophets,

[1] Heb. iii. 1.

but not all. Christ is teacher. But S. James tells us, 'Be not many teachers, my brethren.'[1] Christ is apostle,[2] because the Father sent Him. He is the Father's envoy. And as the Father had sent Him, so He sent some of His disciples to be His envoys, but not all. Christ is episkopos, bishop, overseer of souls.[3] Some of His members receive this duty of oversight or supervision, but not all. Christ is Shepherd, the Good Shepherd. He tells Peter to shepherd His sheep. S. Paul tells certain at Ephesus to shepherd the flock of God.[4] But all cannot be shepherds; else where would be the sheep? nor all episkopoi; or whom would they supervise? These duties must be confined to some members of the body, as S. Paul tells us apostleship and prophetship were.[5]

Some Christians, therefore, represent Christ in special ways. They have received from Him some of the functions which He exercised and exercises towards His disciples. Here is an inequality. It is that sort of inequality which exists within every highly organised organism. We will not refuse it as one of those relics of past ages which will pass away in the full sunshine of democracy. God hath tempered the body together, and not only our natural body, but the body of Christ. We will not be jealous of those on whom Christ has laid the burden of sharing in His Headship. We might more reasonably pity them—still better pray for them, as being burdened for our profit.

But it is true that all Christians represent Christ in some ways. Again, it is true that the whole body of Christ represents Him to the world.

Ye see our calling, brethren. How are we fulfilling it? Where is that whole body which represents Christ to the world? What is its witness? Where are its leaders? What united lead do they give? What united following do they command? Where is the equal witness

[1] James iii. 1. [2] Heb. iii. 1. [3] 1 Pet. ii. 25.
[4] Acts xx. 28. [5] 1 Cor. xii. 29, 30.

to truth of all the several members who are kings because they give that witness? Where is the equal witness of the equally redeemed, in lives of righteousness? Where is the peace and love of those who are equally sons of one Father?

I have called this chapter 'Realities.' It speaks of things which are realities in the mind of God. We shall never get union or any other good thing till they begin to be realities in our minds and hearts and consciences, till the divine realities dominate us. The realities are with God and not with us. We share them by yielding to our Lord, that out of His fulness we may all receive.

CHAPTER IV

REAWAKENING

'LET us conceive of Reunion as the reawakening of the Great Church, the Universal Church, the Body of Christ, to a consciousness of itself and to an exercise of the power of the life which God has planned for it.'

Reawakening of the body by recognition of the divine facts—that is the postulate of real reunion. We have made a false start by rushing into the task of devising terms of reunion. It has given us the notion that reunion can be attained by ingenious expedients and diplomatic concessions and all the paraphernalia of spiritual opportunism. We need to make an attempt to rediscover facts, and those divine facts. There is much talk about the recognition of ministries. What we really need is the recognition of Christ. He is the centre of Unity. He is the source of Unity. It is His act that makes the one Body for the one Spirit. There is no need (as some fear we intend) to patch up a 'semblance of unity.' Nor are we given the task (as others think) of creating, or even of restoring, a unity. We have to recognise a unity which Christ has made.

We have got to get rid of our blindness, whether it be congenital and involuntary or deliberate and sinful. We have got to discard all our deductions from our blindness, however great their antiquity may be. We have got to see Christ's one Body as He sees it, and as we do not yet see it.

'There is one Body,' and Christ has made it one, and we have been unable to make it not one, although we continually act as if we and our fathers had succeeded in making it many.

Several groups of people have partial visions of this fact.

The Indian Christians are one such group. They perceive this fact much more clearly than we do. The reason is that they have a background against which it is shown up. The background is the non-Christian world. Place Christianity with all its divisions against the background, for instance, of Hinduism, and Christians realise that they are all one in an allegiance which separates them by unbridgeable gulfs from the idolatrous cults or from the philosophies which have no place for forgiveness. The Indian Christian may find no better way of expressing this than by reiterating in various tones of irritation that he has no interest in the points of theology and organisation which divide Westerns. But what he really means is that he feels that Christ has taken hold of him and removed him from the vain superstitions which he sees all around him, and has made him one with everyone else who has been so liberated. The Indian Christians are conscious that they are essentially one body. This consciousness varies in degree with circumstances and power of reflection and of expression. Those who have received careful instruction from the missionaries in theological colleges for ministers or lay-agents have a greater appreciation of the importance of the different views of different Christian denominations than ordinary Indian laymen. Others have the differences impressed on them by unfriendly competition. Again, the sense of solidarity is stronger in Southern India than in Northern India. But, when all these deductions are made, the fact remains that there is an underlying consciousness of unity among Indian Christians which is daily reinforced by social and

political conditions. At a recent conference with some forty of my clergy in Bombay, during a debate on Reunion, every Indian clergyman who spoke said that, whether the Europeans united or not, there would be a united Indian Church, and hardly one of them said anything else. It needs to be continually remembered that the unity movement in India is not a movement of leaders, but of the rank and file. The depth of it is hidden from some missionaries because their closest and most frequent contacts are with their agents, who are under the impression that they are expected to be 'loyal C.M.S. men' or 'loyal S.P.G. men,' etc. But the bulk of Indian Christians have no such loyalty. They have a loyalty to Christ and a loyalty to Christianity which is a half-awake inarticulate loyalty to the one body. If it were quite awake, if it gained power of expression, it would be a conscious and professed adherence to the Universal Church.

Another group of Christians who have a partial vision of the existence of the Christ-made unity is formed of those Protestants who will tell you that the one thing necessary is to 'hold the Head'; and that all who do so are one, and there is an absolute equality between them. Those who are proud to call themselves Catholics or Churchmen habitually undervalue this point of view, because it is often advanced with the deliberate purpose of belittling the claims of some particular form of Church organisation or of Church order in general. And, like all pietism, this point of view tends towards disintegration. With our strong sense of the articulation of the body, we are quick to say that these good people have no idea of the body at all. They often speak of *the Church*, meaning the whole mass of Christians or of converted Christians. But the Church, as they conceive it, seems to us no more organised than a mass of steel filings sticking on to a magnet. On the other hand, we may easily do them less than justice. They are very near to the truths that the

unity of the body is real, and exists now, and that the cause of the unity is Christ Himself. Reawakening for them would mean reawakening to the sense that a body implies coherence by means of articulation, a definite living structure, co-ordinated functioning of the parts and continuous and consistent development. They do not seriously bend their wills to the realisation of any such idea, because their sense of the possible corporate activity of the Great Church is asleep. The activities, to the need of which they are awake, are those of the individual Christian and of the groups of individual Christians, all of which indifferently they call Churches. But group-loyalty has less and less hold on their younger educated members, and it is difficult to judge whether they are learning to feel a loyalty to Evangelicalism, considered as a unity, which might attain an outward organisation as a federation, or to 'the Church,' which, in spite of being assumed to be invisible, exercises an attraction over their minds and imaginations.

There is another tendency in the popular mind which seems to make towards Reunion. It is very common among laymen and often expressed by officers in the Army. It is the tendency to regard Christians as 'all the same,' and to speak with contempt and impatience of our divisions as caused by ecclesiastical perversity. Sometimes 'all the same' means 'equally foolish and unintelligible.' One can hardly take that position as indicating a far-off vision of the oneness of the body. But when the position is held by persons who are generally favourable to Christianity, it really means that the moral influence of Christianity is all the same whatever may be the theological and other dogmas which are taught as its foundation. What the speakers want is a concentration of forces on a moral objective. The reawakening which they need is to realise that this concentration can only be made if the One Leader is acknowledged, and is

acknowledged as having created one great army which is at present in a state of discord and divided counsels, such as would inevitably ruin the chances of any earthly army.

The typical 'Catholic's' position is very different from all this. He regards with the utmost impatience any such argument as that which has been developed in the last few pages. For him the unity of the body must be a visible unity of organisation. A body implies articulation, and there is such an articulated body, and no person and no group of persons who are outside it are in the body or of the body. It is quite true that the one body exists. That all 'Catholics' would say. But ask them what and where it is, and you will receive different answers. One will say it is the Church of Rome. Another will say it is the Orthodox Church. Another, it is the Church of Rome, the Orthodox Church, and the Church of England; in other words, the Churches which we Anglicans think have retained the historic faith and the Apostolical Succession, considered as one in faith and organisation, though not to-day in communion one with another. And *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The 'Catholic' vision of Reunion is reabsorption of all Christians outside whatever he holds to be the *ecclesia* into that body. Catholics differ, no doubt, in respect to the body or bodies which they acknowledge as 'the Catholic Church,' but they are at one in holding that the unity of the Catholic Church must consist in *one faith*, which, when the Church defines, all Churchmen must accept the definition, and *one organisation*, which, though in the course of ages the Church has modified and developed it, nothing less than the Church Catholic acting as a whole has authority to modify or develop. The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, which amongst other purposes was intended to open and keep open to the Church that fountain of Life which is the source of her unity, can only be securely

ministered through the valid ministry of the historic Church.

This is all very simple, clear and coherent. To us Anglicans it is a vision of unity which might be very easily realised if Romans and Easterns would admit our reasonable claims, and each others'! To a Roman it is an actual seen unity. To an Orthodox it is an actual seen unity. But to one and all the question must be put, do the facts correspond to your theory? Are all those outside what you call the Catholic Church outside the Body of Christ? In other words, does Christ agree with you in your definition of the Catholic Church?

The difficulty of answering these questions may be shown by an illustration. Lady Sophia Palmer, a devout Anglican, married a great French Ultramontane, the Comte de Franqueville. In spite of the hopes and wishes of her husband, pressed upon her with the delicacy and forbearance of a deep and reverent affection, she remained to the end a convinced member of the Anglican Communion.[1] After her death a Curé of a village near to her Burgundian home wrote in a local paper: 'Si, de droit, elle était hors *du corps* de l'Eglise, de fait, par ses vertus, elle appartenait sûrement à son *âme*.' This is a phrase which I notice is becoming popular with Anglo-Catholics. But it has no meaning. How can a human being, who is both soul and body, belong to the soul but not to the body of the Church? The Church is the Body of Christ. How can the Body of Christ itself have a soul and a body? But if that objection be spurned as verbal, I ask, *What is the Soul of the Church?* If the expression means anything at all, it must mean either the Holy Spirit or the Lord Jesus. Well, if good people who are outside the one

[1] A further light on the real opinion of great men in the Roman Church is thrown by advice given by two Cardinals during her lifetime, as recorded at p. 286 of Lady Laura Ridding's Memoir, *Sophia Matilda Palmer, Comtesse de Franqueville* (John Murray, 1919).

body which is the Church, belong to the soul of that body, how can it logically be said that they do not belong to the body? The formula, 'pious Non-Catholics belong to the soul of the Church but not to its body' is *camouflage*, and is used to disguise the fact that the position is untenable that the 'Catholic Church,' in the sense of the Church of Rome, is identical with the Body of Christ. The formula is equally *camouflage* when it is used by our 'Anglo-Catholics.' We all feel greatly relieved when we have found a formula behind which we can entrench ourselves. But we cannot expect to be protected by *camouflage* for ever. There is something still worse about this bit of *camouflage*. It is put up not only against our enemies but also against ourselves. Some of us, at least, want to hide from ourselves that our position is untenable.

Now I am fully aware that it is a very serious thing to say that so ancient a position as this, that those who are outside the historic Church are outside the Body of Christ, is untenable. Further, I admit that that position ought to be true if the historic Church had been true to its Master's Way. But to-day the facts are too strong for any impartial or unprejudiced mind to resist. It is not that a great Saint here and there lives apart from the historic Church. That is true, and more also. A great deal of the advance of sacred knowledge, a great deal of the quickening of social conscience and of the victories of Christian morality, and a great deal of the conversion of the heathen are due to the activities of groups of Christians who are not within the historic Church or Churches, and who have been, alas! proud to be 'free' of it or them. There is the sting of it. We have been outstripped in many of the fruits of righteousness by men who have often expressed themselves contemptuously and contentiously about the bodies from which they have separated. Even now, when the tone of contempt and of contention is no

longer prominent, it remains hard to take up with a calm mind the task of considering the fruits of the 'free' Churches. But to that task we are called by a voice that we dare not disregard, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

We cannot deny that many of the fruits of 'Non-Catholic' Christians and groups of Christians are fruits of the Spirit. At home this is fairly clear: on the mission field it is as plain as daylight. What are the fruits? It is not merely that men and women are made serious, or kindly, or good citizens, nor even that the devils of lust and avarice and superstition are cast out. Nor is it that a following is gathered for Luther or Calvin or Wesley or General Booth. It is that men and women are brought to Jesus Christ to be healed and saved by Him: that a following is gathered for Jesus Christ of men and women who believe on Him through the word of the Apostles preserved in the New Testament and through the fellowship of other believers.

What Catholics have got to do is to wake up and rub their eyes and look at these new children of the Covenant. The words spoken to the old Zion are not altogether inappropriate to her who claims to be the New Zion. 'Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together and come to thee.' What reception will they have to-day? A welcome or a rebuff? Listen once more to the far-off echoes of the matchless music: 'The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.' That is what they are saying to-day. 'Our little Churches are too narrow for us; give us place in the Great Church.' But she who hopes she is New Zion does not know that she has ever been bereaved. She will say in her heart, like the former Zion: 'Who hath begotten me these?' But she never realised that when she cast out their fathers, or their fathers separated themselves from her, the loss was not all on their side.

She was 'bereaved,' she was 'solitary,' 'an exile,' 'left alone.' When she awakes up to that fact, when she recognises that all the separations were 'her bereavement,' she will ask to better purpose, 'These, where were they?'[1] And a voice which she knows will answer, 'Not far from thee: in My Body.'

The last paragraph will make some of my readers very impatient. 'Mere words' some will say, and others 'blasphemy.' The latter will continue, 'The Holy Catholic Church has been awake all along; has had a clear policy from the first; has been purified and strengthened by each expulsion of heretics. Did not S. Paul recommend this method? What impudence it is to tell us at this time of day that Gamaliel was wiser than S. Paul! The policy of the Holy Catholic Church has been exclusive from the first. Now we are told the ideal is inclusiveness. Can we suppose that the Church has been wrong all along?' This is no fancied objection: it has been said to my face in almost those words. I realise the gravity of the objection. But who was it that told the parable of the tares and the wheat? A greater than S. Paul, I believe. And what if the system of exclusion, as it has been used, was, to a large extent, the very procedure forbidden in that parable? Is it not clear enough that among the 'tares' which have been rooted up out of the historic Church we find to-day some very good wheat? Is not this exactly what the Lord prophesied? The historic Church must bear blame for neglecting His warning.

On the other hand, it has been a principle with many of the separated Churches to require signs of conversion in those who are to be recognised as members. 'A converted membership' is still the watchword of all Baptists. And this or a similar theory of membership is put forward even by the modern Free Church writers of 'Pathways to Christian Unity,' as one of the contributions which Free

[1] Isaiah xlix. 18–21.

Churchism will make to the ultimate Church, though it is confessed that 'at the present time the demand for "the evangelical experience of Christ" is not so consistently made' of members as it was in earlier days.[1] It must be admitted that any such theory stands in more direct contradiction to the parables of the wheat and tares and of the drag net than the procedure of the historic Church. The latter is intended to exclude from the Church those who are actively and deliberately rebellious against the Church's faith or morals; the Free Church theory would exclude all except those who can satisfy men that they are 'converted.' Neither of these theories can justify themselves against our Lord's parables if those parables bear their natural meaning.

But at the moment our concern is with the historic Church and its exclusions. It is not only by formal decree that it has excluded heretics and others. Unless the sense of membership is very strong, exclusion can be done by the cold shoulder. This was actually the procedure which lost the Wesleyans to our own Church. The split would have been avoided if the Church had borne with the new enthusiasm, recognising (as S. Paul did about certain Corinthians) that the enthusiasts, however unusual or disorderly their proceedings, could only say *Jesus is Lord* by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, also, the split would have been avoided if the enthusiasts had been taught that they were never justified in leaving the body on any ground, but must work and wait and pray till they had leavened it with their holy ardour. If the Body of Christ at any time on earth is to claim an absolute allegiance, such as is His due, it must show itself glad and willing to make a home for everyone who can say *Jesus is Lord*. If, again, the Body of Christ at any time on earth is to be such a home, each individual who makes that profession must consider it his paramount duty to stand by the body, to adhere to the body, to live and work in the body, so that

[1] *Pathways to Christian Unity*, p. 71.

it may be filled with all the fulness of Christ. If the individual must give the body time to recognise and appreciate and absorb his new aspect of the common faith, so must the body give the individual time to grow in faith till he is no longer—what at his first formulation of a new teaching he may seem or even be—at variance with the faith of the Great Church.

These thoughts come very near to some burning questions of our day. The reader will almost inevitably ask that they should be reduced to the terms of a practical policy and so tested.

We ought, no doubt, to banish and drive away erroneous and strange doctrines. But does this mean the same as banishing and driving away those who hold them? The Church owes much, just as Science owes much, to the free discussion of theories, and in discussions some of the disputants will be more, and some less, right. The Church ought in the end to formulate what has come to be generally believed, for the guidance of those who cannot conduct, and can hardly follow, a discussion. The Church ought to state the truth as it has received, believed, and up to date understands it. It might reasonably withdraw its commission to teach from those who continue to teach against it. But it ought not, I suggest, to excommunicate them, or even to prevent them from teaching as uncommissioned teachers. Still less ought it to excommunicate their followers. Many of the latter may follow with very little understanding of the point at issue, from personal loyalty or local solidarity or a hundred reasons. Many may have a real working faith in our Lord, based on things far deeper than the point at issue. Their heart may be right when their head is wrong. Or, again, they may have taken an epidemic disease of thought or feeling which the Great Physician well knows will pass. Why should not the Church—having proclaimed it to be a disease—wait faithfully for it to pass?

Once I heard a 'good Catholic' of our communion

earnestly exhorting his brethren not to be impressed by the magnitude of the missionary work of the heretics of the present day. 'It will all perish,' he said. 'Remember the Nestorians. They had missions extending throughout Asia all the way to China. But,' he added triumphantly, 'they have all disappeared. Not a trace of them remains, but two or three inscriptions. The same will happen to these dissenting missions.' Is that the real lesson to be learned from the history of the Nestorian missions? Were they really missionaries on behalf of Nestorius or of Christ? Was there anything in poor muddle-headed Nestorius or in his doctrine that could have converted half Asia? Who did their martyrs die for? Is it not a more reasonable supposition that the Nestorian Churches contained many pious, if partly ignorant, Christians, in whom Christ lived and worked, though in word they misrepresented His Divine nature? It was a loss to them that the Orthodox Church was unable, because of its final separation from them, to recover those to whom the tenets of Nestorius had become an empty tradition. It was a loss to the Orthodox Church that it was unable to use their enthusiasm. It is idle to speculate whether, if they had been recovered, their missions would have been overtaken by the fate which overtook the Church of Cyprian and Augustine. But it cannot be a matter of congratulation to the Church that so much belief in Christ has disappeared from the world.

From such considerations it appears that our re-awakening to the paramount importance of Christ's part in making His Church, and to the paramount claim of His Body on the loyalty of us all, necessitates a revision of some principles which have long been taken for granted as established, if not self-evident. To revise the theories of centuries, to reconsider the methods of a long series of generations, is a formidable demand. But it can be made of the Church of Christ now upon earth, if it

is reawakening. What is its reawakening teaching it? To look at the Body of Christ, as found in Him. It is a body constituted by His incorporation in it of men and women whom He has called and chosen. 'Ye did not choose me, but I chose you.' It is not simply everyone whom He touches at all that comes into His Body. The multitudes by the Sea of Galilee were not all made members of His Church. There must be a definite act of incorporation, for the sake of the person incorporated and for the sake of the other members who form the body and must act as members towards members. Therefore baptism. But baptism is not only God's act of incorporation. Since the members of Christ's Body are conscious beings gifted with free will, He will not make them His own against their will or without their consent. So at baptism there is the profession of faith and obedience, the response to the call, the oath of the soldier to the King into Whose service he is enlisted.

It will be at once objected that all this is untrue of infant baptism. But it is precisely here that the rationale of the institution of sponsors is to be found. Let us reconsider the baptism of an infant. The infant who is born into a Christian family has no need to wait for baptism till it is turned to the light or 'converted.' It is born with the light all round it. From its earliest days the Christian folk who tend it and feed it will join it with them in keeping God's commandments and trusting Him. In its early years their observance of the great promises is its observance; its observance is at first only an imitation and a sharing of theirs. It is because the Christian infant is continuous with the Christian family, that God incorporates it, before it can think or speak, into His household, into His Son's Body. And members of the Christian family answer for its mind and will, which they will form as the days go by. The reality on man's side is that the family and society into which

an infant is born does actually mould the infant's growing character. If family and society be Christian, they will mould it Christianly. The reality on God's side is that He calls and makes holy families, and His will to adopt all children of Christian families anticipates the will of each child born in them to be a Christian.

It is certainly divine guidance which has converted Confirmation into the chance for the Christian person who has been baptised in infancy to come and make profession that he understands the calling of God and all that has happened, and, as a conscious and thinking being, accepts his membership of the one body, and claims the help of the one Spirit to enable him to be a true, faithful, and helpful member.

The incorporation of the members of His Body is the act of the Lord, but they must accept it willingly and publicly, willingly for their own sake, publicly for the sake of the other members. The soldier must know that he has enlisted. The army must know who belong to it.

But the incorporation is not the incorporation of a changeless thing. It is the incorporation of a growing being. (Therefore our Lord's constant recurrence to the figure of seeds.) We are not only put into the body, but we are to grow in the body. Our life is transformed by its life, His life. Therefore, for our own sake, He gave us the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. In it He continues, renews, perfects His act of incorporation. He tells us in that Sacrament, with ever new insistence, that the making of the body is His act; but that men must accept from Him their place in the body willingly and publicly, willingly for their own sake, publicly for the sake of the other members. We must know Whom we have believed and our fellow members must know it too. We must know Who is our life, and take our life from Him, and take it in fellowship with our fellow members

in whom we are to look for and to see the same life, with whom we are to live it.

Can anyone think of a more simple, more clear, more universal way of presenting the truth about the body than by these Sacraments, or a more certain way of constituting the body and of preserving it in life? Yet we have not succeeded in making the sacramental system cover the ground which our Lord obviously intended it to cover. The Sacraments are necessary indeed to men; but can we go on to say that they are necessary to God? It is clear enough that there are men and women whom Jesus Christ wants in His Body, but they do not use the Sacraments, or, if they do, they undervalue and depreciate them, and yet the Lord keeps those men and women His.

The situation at which we have thus arrived is 'wholly a defeat' for the Church of God. On the one hand, the historic Church denies the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood to many in whom the Lord manifests His power and the signs of His working. On the other hand, many men and women whose lives are devoted to Christ have ceased to avail themselves of the help of the Sacraments. Some, like the Quakers, definitely repudiate them. Others have drifted into a position of belittling and disregarding them. The result has been summed up by Dr. John R. Mott in the judgment that the deepest division among Christians is between those who are Sacramentarians and those who are not.

Here is one of the many subjects about which we have need of a mediating theology. There is perhaps no prerequisite of Reunion so urgently required as this—a true, comprehensive, and mediating theology. What the book of the Acts did for the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic ages, that we need to have done for the age of Reunion. And it must be done in the spirit of the book of the Acts. That book is in large part a history of how the Apostles considered, weighed, and gave themselves over to the

guidance of *the facts of the divine working*. We now must awake to the facts. We must rub our eyes and look at them. We must, if need be, follow the example of the Apostles and adjust our theories to the facts. That is an indispensable part of the Reawakening.

If the Sacraments are taught anew in the sense in which Jesus Christ clearly intended them, if they are administered with a single eye to fulfilling the main purposes for which He instituted them, then all those who are devoted to Him can be called upon to use them. And they will not disobey the call. Nor will they miss the blessings which they now miss. Not least of these is the enhanced sense of their incorporation by Christ in Himself, and the enhanced capacity to employ to the full the powers which flow from that incorporation.

Finally, let us reawaken in ourselves the knowledge of the meaning of our Lord's prayer for unity. Some of that meaning has been drawn out in the Indian Bishops' Synodical Letter. It belongs to the subject of this chapter to emphasise one other point. Who are they for whom Jesus Christ prayed and prays, that they may be one? 'I pray for those who believe on Me through their word,'[1] that is, the Apostles' word. The Apostles' word has been enshrined for all time in the New Testament. Those who believe on Jesus Christ through the words of the New Testament and the exposition of those words—that is a company which extends beyond the limits of the Churches that claim to be Apostolic and Catholic and historic. Yet no one can doubt that our Lord is praying that all that company should be one—one in that most intimate sense which He indicated by comparing it to the unity subsisting between Himself and the Father.

Some say that this means an internal, not an external, unity. But no one who has learned the value of Sacraments, or taught that all life on earth is sacramental,

[1] S. John xvii. 20.

can consistently put forward such a theory. Nor can anyone suppose that the unity which our Lord dignified by comparing it to that most perfect unity, is compatible with the competition which seems to be the inevitable result of external disunion. Some readers may think it incredible that such a theory should be adopted by anyone. But I am again quoting the arguments of pious and strenuous men which I have myself heard. Such arguments are so difficult to justify, so easy to overthrow, that they give an impression that their authors are catching at any way of escape from a conclusion which, as they perceive, involves revision of the teaching of a lifetime or of many generations. Well, we all of us can remember many mornings when we have resented being woken up, even when it was high time to awake. It is even more vexatious to be roused from spiritual sleep than from physical. And I would not incur the anger of men whom I respect, or rouse distrust among those with whom I have long worked, except that I cannot get away from the echoes that ring in my ears, calling, as I believe, every one of us in this hour of destiny—

> Awake, thou that sleepest,
> and arise from the dead,
> and Christ shall shine upon thee.

CHAPTER V

THE GREAT CHURCH

WHAT is the Great Church? the reader will ask. First and foremost, I mean by this expression the Church as Jesus Christ sees it; or as it is in Him. It began with Him. It looks to no other origin, no later founder or refounder. It consists of all those to whom He has given a place in His body, which it is. It is, if I understand S. Barnabas rightly, what he describes as the 'general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven.'[1] First among these in our mind must ever stand the 'spirits of just men made perfect.'[1] They who now see in the light of the Lord the differences which separated them while here are drawing us toward a better understanding and the true unity all the time.

We think next of those whose life and thought and ways seem to us most like Christ. But we think of all these in an association. This thought puzzles and supports us. It is not an association of one period like a day or a generation. It is an association which spans the centuries, growing ever and developing a real life of its own, which has a history. And that history again puzzles and supports us. As we study the Saints, their life, their doings, their writings; as we study the changes which the presence of the Christian society within it has produced in human society at large, we acquire or ought to acquire a Great Church sense. We begin to feel what really

[1] Heb. xii. 23.

belonged to the permanent purpose of the Lord, what belonged to the peculiarities of a time or to the idiosyncrasies of a person. Again we begin to see how persons, opinions, and practices fit into each other and contribute to the total corporate witness to truth or the total corporate expression of life. The witness of the Church to truth is given by many men expressing different parts of truth. The expression by the Church of what is worth living for is given by many men living for different parts of what is valuable in life. Yet as time goes on a great deal of solid agreement is reached both in truth and life, as the Head impresses the one or the other on member after member of His body, and they give an expression to the truth or moral impulse which they have received, and the expression is remembered and recorded.

Beside a Great Church sense we ought to have a Great Church loyalty. More and more it ought to be clear to our minds and hearts that there is only one Church, the Church as it is in Christ. And this ought to teach us the limits of Little Church loyalties. For the sad fact is that we cannot now say that any Church existing on earth is the Great Church. Certainly ever since the separation of East and West there have been on earth two Churches, neither of which were the Great Church, and the longer they remained apart the more sure they were to grow into Little Church ways. This statement will be resented both by members and admirers of the Church of Rome. We are concerned immediately with the present: and is it not true that the Roman communion of to-day shows a markedly one-sided development? For instance, take the immense elaboration of rules for life, the teaching that there is a rule for everything, that on certain days a Catholic must hear Mass, that a Catholic must go to Confession once a year at least, that every small action of the Priest in public worship must be done in this way and no other. Is not this elaboration of

regulation an essentially 'Little Church' feature? It answers to the demand of one type of human nature only. It represents the orderliness of God's working at the expense of leaving unrepresented its spontaneity. Or take again the ideal of life for the pious which that communion sets forth. Is not life under the direction of a spiritual adviser so exclusively held up as the ideal, that other types of piety are neglected? Yet the neglected types claim the right to exist under the liberty of the Gospel. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Are not these instances enough to show how in consequence of her isolation the greatest now existing Church in Christendom has become 'Little Church' in character? But she has retained all along much of the Great Church tradition, and with it of the Great Church temper.

The cause of some separations may be brought home to the separated as their fathers' errors or sins. Supposing that the first excommunication of a whole great area for heresy—learned people and unlearned alike—may have been right, the separation of that area from the rest of the Church may soon become wrong when the heresy ceases to have reality. Then the children of the wheat among the tares grow up by no fault of their own in hopeless Little Churchism. Because they are separated, they develop all sorts of other differences from the body which extruded their fathers, and those differences cause reactions and the development of counter differences in the other body, and both acquire stronger and stronger Little Churches loyalties and lose more and more the Great Church sense and Great Church loyalty. The great reconciliation with which the doctrinal controversies of the fourth century ended supplies an instance of what can be done to restore unity and preserve the Great Church ideal. The failure to go on to any such true mutual understanding and to attain any such reconciliation at

the end of the next century is a sad example in the opposite direction.

Thus far we have been considering examples of Churches which have, so to say, become ' Little Church ' in character against their will. There are other Churches which owed their very existence to ' Little Church ' principles. The whole long succession of Puritan communities from the Novatianists downwards stands for an attempt to have no one in the Church but persons who have attained a particular degree of godliness. As the Church is a nursery of growing plants belonging to God and watered by Him, and as God has the patience of the husbandman beyond all earthly husbandmen, this theory of the Puritans is contrary to His methods, purpose, and will. Through it they form Churches which are in idea and intention less than the Great Church, and consequently they inevitably develop a ' Little Church ' character.

Yet another ground for forming separate bodies of Christians is very familiar to us in more modern days. It is the wish to concentrate on one particular point of doctrine or practice. A number of men find that this point is not held by the Church or else that their contemporaries are quite unwilling to allow superlative importance to it. They separate into a new body in order to place their particular point above all others, and enjoy that proportion of Christian teaching or life which this emphasis produces. This is manifest ' Little Churchism.' From the first the Great Church view would be, ' We must make our pet point tell in the great whole of Christian doctrine and Christian life, and all the more because we are the only people who care about it. For it was not given us for our delectation but for the profit of the many that they might be saved.'

The early heretics were expelled because they were wrong or considered wrong on one point. The later separatists expelled themselves because they were right

or considered themselves right on one point. The result with which I am now most concerned was the same. Both proceedings produced 'Little Churches.' Both produced 'Little Churchism' in those who went out and in those who remained behind. Tendencies developed in separation were suspected or condemned because they were developed by rivals. They were developed to extremes, and even to unhealthy and wrong extremes, because there were not in the same body the men and women whose temperaments and minds would furnish the balancing weight or would supply the complementary truth or practice. One of the most hopeful signs of the present day is the weariness of denominationalism which has overtaken almost all the one-idea churches, and the general tendency among their adherents to emphasise the superiority of the claims of 'the truth held in common' over the claims of their one idea, and to demand reunion on the basis of the great body of common truth. Though that Church would still be founded on opinions rather than on the acceptance of the incorporating act of God, still it is much better to found on opinions than on one opinion. So far that is a return towards 'Great Churchism.'

Now the idea of the Great Church is essentially unworldly. No one can hold it clear and clean unless he has by God's grace cast out self and all its works, jealousy, rivalry, self-importance, self-opinionatedness, partizanship, and the pride that insists that your party or yourself must and shall win. To feel that it is a necessity that I or we should be important, my or our opinions should survive, is the mark of the world, and has nothing to do with the Great Church. But it is very easily introduced into a Little Church, and it will quickly introduce 'Little Churchism' if it once gets hold of the Church. I suggest that it did get hold of the undivided Church when it had made the fatal alliance with the world which is known as the conversion of the Empire. With that event the

spirit of the world came into the Church. The necessity which all States feel to survive by crushing opponents entered unconsciously into Church policy and Church life, into doctrinal disputes and disciplinary decisions. I venture to suggest that that was how the undivided Church lost the 'Great Church sense,' and it followed from that loss that sooner or later it would be infected with 'Little Churchism' and would split up into Little Churches. It is perfectly true that the section called catholic kept far more of the Great Church sense than the excommunicated or the sectaries. But the way of the world had come into the Church, and the way of the world is the way of war, not the way of peace, because the world has never taken itself for one family or one body, and without Christ as its Head it cannot. If this is true, the lesson is the danger of the connexion of Church and State.

At this point we may turn to illustrate the workings of the 'Great Church sense' in the matter of opinions and practices. The New Testament represents the 'Great Church sense' to perfection, but in a peculiar way. It tells us most things by means of germinal ideas, seed-thoughts, normative principles. The Church in the age of the canonical writers was in its infancy. The developments that were to come had not come. The Lord had deliberately refrained from binding it by legislation or by written statement. He left behind Him the memory of typical actions and flashing utterances. But He gave the Spirit to supply the growing needs of the ever growing Church. The suggestions of that Spirit through the successive generations caused men to develop opinions and practices according as men could receive and understand Him. It is that Spirit which gives their unity to the doctrines and practices of the Church—a unity sometimes concealed from us by our inability to put together the different parts of truth which is a whole to Him, sometimes marred by the misunderstandings and errors

of those through whom He deigned to speak. The 'Great Church sense' is in the last resort the sense of the unity and multiplicity of the one Spirit's workings in the one Body.

The sort of judgment to which the 'Great Church sense' leads may be illustrated tentatively by two examples:

1. *Confession.*—The necessity of confession to God is a fundamental truth. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'[1]

The benefit of confession to men is a general truth, to which S. James bears witness, 'Confess your sin one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.'[2]

The benefit of public and private confessions are complementary truths. For some persons and occasions public confession is better, for other persons and occasions private. Both from history and experience we can feel that this position belongs to Great Church truth.

To say further that every Christian must make a private confession at least once a year, or that remission of deadly sins after baptism cannot be had but by Sacramental confession, seem to be 'Little Church' positions. The first rests on the general reduction of Christian life to rule, which, if it be not false in principle as being Rabbinism and not Christianity, is at any rate wrong, if put forward as a universal system, because it is clear that many of the greatest Saints from S. Paul downwards would not have been suited or improved by it. The second belongs to that love for minute definition which, though it may help some minds towards the truth, in many subjects must fail of the truth itself, as in this particular. The distinction between deadly and venial sins is much too slippery to found a general rule binding conscience upon. These then, it may be concluded, are Romanist

[1] 1 John i. 9. [2] James v. 16.

'Little Church' positions, defective in themselves because they represent the uncontrolled pushing to extremes of tendencies partly right and partly wrong. It is just as easy to find corresponding Protestant 'Little Church' positions on the same subject. The common Protestant objection to auricular confession *in toto* is one such. It arises from an uncontrolled and one-sided inference from the truth, that 'there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' No one, of course, in the spirit of the Great Church, teaches confession so as to derogate from the sole mediatorship of Jesus Christ. The protest of the Protestant in favour of that truth starts from a perception of a genuine danger, but he carries his protest too far when he forbids his sinning and repentant and heavy-laden brethren from what is, for very many, the best way in which that mediatorship can be brought home to them.

2. *Ministry*.—Christ appointed and commissioned a ministry in His Church, of which the commission to Peter and various sayings to the Apostles are the beginnings. To this he added His special training of them. Thus we begin with the institution of a company of persons by our Lord whom He trained in that work which He does for, and to, and over the Church, and commissioned them to carry it on. This is fundamental truth.

To this is added S. Paul's teaching about the body, and the differentiation of function among the members. This is general truth.

To this is added all the actions of the Apostles, which are traced in some detail in the next following chapter: and besides that, what the Church did after the Apostles. Looking at this evidence as a whole, what would the Great Church view of it be?

First, there is the ministry of commission, to which our Lord made the first appointments when He 'chose twelve.' This ministry of commission has been continued by officers (first Apostles, then 'other notable

men,' then bishops) acting for Christ and on behalf of the Universal Church. The laying on of hands was a fit symbol of all this and always used.

Second, there is the ministry of prophecy, which God raises up from time to time, giving as He pleases a special power of utterance, which the Church recognises and men profit by. The laying on of hands is not a fit symbol of this recognition and was not in early times used.

The Great Church view, I submit, would be that these ministries are complementary truths, the ministry of commission representing the continual oversight of Christ over His Church, and the ministry of prophecy representing the renewal of His Church by a series of separate in-breathings of the Holy Spirit into various individuals.

Third, the Great Church sense would decide that the claim of every congregation or local Church to make for itself a ministry of commission when and how it likes is alien to Great Church principles, because it is and has always proved to be fertile in producing schism and powerful in maintaining it. The Great Church sense would add that this claim is the pushing to an extreme of a principle which is true in itself. Some provision ought to be made to allow the Spirit to indicate the men most suitable for ministerial office through those who know them best. Whether, as in early days, this is sought from the spasmodic utterances of members of the congregation, or, as in later, from a more regular election by the congregation itself, is not essential; such variations belong to the variety of periods. The Spirit has shown sufficiently that He desires to speak through the people who have naturally the best chance of knowing the characters of those living amongst them, and thus to indicate to the representatives of the Universal Church *who* ought to be ordained. But some communities have pushed the truth to an extreme and isolated it, so as to run into error, when they say that the congregation can ordain to the commissioned ministry on its own authority with-

out calling in the representatives of the Great Church. It is as the representatives of the Great Church that the bishops ordain to a ministry which is potentially and in idea universal, though it is exercised primarily on behalf of one congregation.

Such a view of the ministry may be challenged in particulars. But I advance it here as an illustration of the sort of view to which the Great Church sense would seem to lead. God grant that, if it be wrong, the truer view may be speedily made clear.

This seems the place to insert a few words on 'The Church and the Churches.' A great deal of precarious inference has been built upon the theory that in the New Testament every local Church is the counterpart in miniature of *the* Church. This theory may be stated in the words of two extracts quoted in Professor J. Oman's article 'Church,' in Hastings' 'Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.' The first is from Sohm's 'Kirchenrecht':

> The faith of the Christian sees in every Christian assembly gathered in the Spirit, the whole of Christianity, the people of God, the total community. On that ground every assembly of Christians was called *ecclesia*, a national assembly of the New Testament Israel.

The second is from Kattenbusch's 'Apostolisches Symbol':

> The words in Matt. xviii. 20, 'for where two or three,' etc., was valid everywhere and of the whole Church. The Χριστὸς is the head of the σῶμα, and this σῶμα is the ἐκκλησία. The use of the plural ἐκκλησίαι is to be compared with the use of πνεύματα, as in 1 Cor. xiv. 32 'the *spirits* of the prophets,' though there was only one πνεῦμα. Each local community is an ἐκκλησία, not a mere συναγωγή, because it is a representation of the whole.

Dr. Hort[1] notes as one of the uses of ecclesia in the Epistles, 'the one universal ecclesia as represented in the local individual ecclesia (as in the address to the

[1] *Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 116, 117.

Ephesian elders). This is confined to 1 Cor. (x. 32; xi. 22; and probably xii. 28).'

Now xii. 28 should most likely not be so classed, as there were no apostles (so far as we know) whom, at the time of writing, God had 'put in the Church' in Corinth. There is no need to understand x. 32 in this way—that passage also might refer to the Universal Church; xi. 32 might well (or even better) refer to the meeting of the Corinthian Christians before God at a public service.

There is very little evidence then for these statements. Yet there is some truth in them. The word 'ecclesia' was selected because it represented the Hebrew Qahal, the solemn meeting of the chosen people in the presence of God. With this traditional use would have been combined the associations of the Greek word, which meant the assembly which met to govern and regulate the affairs of a Greek state. The idea of the ancient people of God in their theocracy was combined with that of the people of a city of Greece in their citizenship. 'Assembly' would be a much more intelligible translation to an ordinary English reader than Church.

Church, ecclesia, is the assembly, always consciously in the sight of God, of His people, separated to His service in their different offices and callings. There is one such great assembly, but it is actually dispersed in many places; it sojourns in this place and in that. But in each place of its sojourning it meets as an assembly in the sight of God. Everywhere it is an assembly, because it obviously *is* an assembly, not for any esoteric reason. But everywhere that assembly is of God's people in His sight. Everywhere His presence makes them what they are as an association or corporation. So far as they are incorporated they are incorporated in Christ. Any unity they have is due to that unity, and reflects it.

But from all that it is not a true inference to say that therefore whatever powers or officers are in the Church

as a whole must be in the local Church. No such inference can be made. It is quite obvious that there were not and could not be in every local Church the same supply of men performing the functions necessary to the whole Church. It is quite obvious that no one ever dreamed of taking the decision of a local Church on a matter of doctrine as of equal authority with a decision of the whole Church. Then why should it be assumed that each local Church had inherent in it the powers of the whole Church ?

It is impossible to take that *a priori* road. We must ask whether there is any evidence that the Lord or His Apostles gave any commission to local Churches to appoint and ordain ministers. This question has been dealt with in the next chapter. Beside this, we must ask whether such a method of ordination would or would not conduce to the general purposes of our Lord, or the common benefit of His Body, the Universal Church.

One other question remains to which an answer must be attempted if we are to get on far with unity.

Do the ' Little Churches ' as at present constituted exist as of right within the Great Church ? All history shows that the local Churches do. Their individual identity is the effect of what we cannot help, the physical constitution of the world and of our bodies. It is plain in the New Testament that this is true of the smallest local Churches. Is it true of groups of these Churches, such as regional or national Churches ? There is no express mention of such in the New Testament, but I would hazard the opinion that they were sure to come into existence with the increase of the Church in numbers and its wider distribution over the world which is cut up into national and regional unities. But the dangers of ' Little Church ' loyalty in a National Church are among the greatest menaces to the victory of the Christian spirit in the world. Still we remember that the kings of the earth are to bring their glory and honour into the Holy City.

The Great Church, then, knows territorial divisions as a part of its providential order.

What then of the Confessional Churches? Is it a part of the nature of the Great Church that it should have in it divisions, the principle of which is that men who agree on certain points of doctrine or practice are placed in one separate division, and other men who agree on other points in another? So far as I have the Great Church sense, I am bound to answer No. There is no room for Confessional Churches in the idea of the Great Church. They deny one of its most fundamental principles, that we have any gift, any knowledge, any understanding, any virtue, not for our own delectation but for the profit of all. Further, even if one holds Sohm's view about the subordinate ecclesia, how can any 'faith see,' in a Confessional Church, 'the whole of Christianity'? How can anyone imagine it to be a 'representation of the whole'? Yet this is the only thing which could give it a claim to be a true subordinate Church within the Great Church. What a 'Confessional Church' really is, is an association of persons for expressing and impressing one side of Christianity. In order to do this to the best purpose they should remain within the body, and carefully avoid even the appearance of having a complete equipment of ministers. But I may be open to the accusation of talking about what I cannot understand, as those can, who judge it from within. To which I would reply that what I am urging is, that we should all judge the whole question from without—that is, from the point of view of the Great Church. At the same time, I would make it clear that I am sure that, for instance, the piety of the Friends is one of the brightest elements in the inheritance of the Great Church. It must be by the malice of the devil that they should have been misled into a doctrine about Sacraments which deprives them of two of the divinely appointed bonds of Great Church unity.

It will not be enough to see the question from the point of view of the Great Church. We shall have to go further. We shall have to find the answer. We shall then have to go further still, and act upon the answer. Our loyalty to the Great Church will drive us to find a real, actual, tangible, visible expression of its existence and its unity. God grant that sooner or later we or our successors may accomplish this great task.

But to-day, if there is anything real in the Reunion movement, it is because the Great Church wakes, or to speak much more truly, because *the Great Church wakens you and me.*

PART II

STUDIES

CHAPTER VI

THE MINISTRY IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

THIS subject has been so often discussed that it may seem superfluous to discuss it again. But it will be, I hope, interesting, and may even be new, if I attempt to indicate the outlines of the history, as I should reconstruct it from the point of view of one who has now lived for some time among missionary Churches.

At the same time, I shall take the opportunity to discuss a few other points which anyone in a study in Europe can verify. These are points on which my contention is that we ought already to have acknowledged agreement, though the most recent literature of Reunion shows that there are still differences of opinion.

The Primitive Church was a missionary Church. The nearest modern equivalent to apostle is missionary. The words do not cover the same ground. Emissary is nearer etymologically, and envoy nearer both etymologically and in usage, but both these words have connotations which ἀπόστολος had not. But apostle in English has a large connotation derived from what we know of the twelve apostles, of which the Greek word is quite devoid. The English reader misses the connexion between the oft-recurring phrase in S. John, 'He that sent me,' and the text 'As my Father sent me, even so send I you,' on the one hand, and the word *apostle* on the other, which is simply a noun cognate to the simplest verb for *to send*, and is so used in John xiii. 16, 'neither is one that is sent' (Greek, an apostle) 'greater than he

that sent him.' This is what made S. Barnabas (if he was the writer) describe our Lord in Hebrews iii. 1, as 'The apostle of our profession.'

Christ is the apostle, envoy, emissary, or missionary of the Father, and in the same sense, according to His express words, the Twelve are His apostles, envoys, emissaries, or missionaries.[1]

The Twelve were apostles in virtue of the sending of Christ. So was S. Paul, as he affirms with much emphasis in the first chapter to the Galatians, relying, no doubt, on the Lord's words to him, as recorded in Acts xxii. 21. The attempt to separate S. Paul in respect to appointment from the Twelve is quite unscriptural. He differed from them, no doubt, in not having companied with them from the time of John's baptism to the day of the Ascension. But he was not a person who came forward saying, 'I feel an inward call of God in my heart, and, in virtue of that and of the work which I have done, I claim recognition as an apostle.' He claimed to be sent out by Jesus Christ whom he had seen.

There are a few passages in the New Testament where the word apostle is used apart from the sense of being sent on a religious mission especially to preach. Epaphroditus is the Philippians' apostle, in the sense of the man sent by the Philippians to Paul.[2] Apparently the same sort of sense must be given to the 'apostles of the Churches' in 2 Corinthians viii. 33. Andronicus and Junias[3] may have been sent by the Church of Jerusalem to the Church of Rome. On the other hand, Barnabas is called

[1] This text by itself should have warned Dr. Hort off the statements which he has made about the authority of the Apostles in the *Christian Ecclesia*, even apart from the arguments which Dr. Mason has made good against his view (*Early History of the Church and Ministry*, ed. Swete, p. 42).

[2] Phil. ii. 25 and iv. 18. [3] Rom. xvi. 7.

in the Acts an apostle from the time when the Church of Antioch sent out Paul and him on their missionary journey. But it is not certain that this was what gave him a claim to this title. Certainly it was not S. Paul's notion of his own claim to it.

There has been much written about the Twelve and other apostles. But the fact is that the word meant simply a person sent (as it is used in Luke xi. 49) ; it took on a peculiar meaning from the persons who were best known among those to whom it was applied, namely those who had been sent by our Lord Himself and had had the advantages of being present during His ministry and seeing Him after His resurrection ; but it could always drop back to mean a man sent on missionary journeys like theirs. We do not know what number of persons would have been so described in apostolic times. However, when the publication and constant reading of the New Testament books had familiarised the Christians with the qualifications of the apostles, they practically ceased to use the word for any other missionaries, except perhaps in such out of the way circles as that which the Didache represents.

With regard to the appointment of *the* Apostles the facts are transparently clear. They were not elected by any assembly or Church. They were not men who volunteered for the work, nor is it anywhere emphasised that they felt any imperative inward call. The balance is all on the other side. 'Ye did not choose me, but I chose you' ;[1] 'God who marked me out, even from my mother's womb' ;[2] 'If not of mine own will, I am entrusted with a stewardship.'[3] When the remaining eleven wish to supply the place of Judas, they do not co-opt, nor does the assembly elect, but they have recourse to the lot, and pray God to 'give a perfect lot.' Before this they had caused 'the brethren' to select two between

[1] John xv. 16. [2] Gal. i. 15. [3] Cor. ix. 17.

whom to cast lots: a procedure which has parallels to which attention will be called shortly. Divine appointment is the characteristic of those missionaries to whom the Church conceded the name Apostle in a special sense.

It should be remarked here that in the course of this story, the work or office to which Matthias was appointed is described by three words: ἀποστολή, ἐπισκοπή, and διακονία.[1] Whether we may assume or not that S. Peter spoke the exact words attributed to him, at any rate the early chronicle of the Jerusalem Church which S. Luke is working over, and S. Luke himself, regarded all these three descriptions as appropriate to the Apostolate. The apostle had a mission (ἀποστολή); he had oversight, supervision (ἐπισκοπή); his work was service (διακονία), for he had learnt from his Master that he who would be greatest in the Church must be 'the servant of all,' even as the Master had been among them 'as he that serveth.'

The three words are those which came to be used for the office of an apostle, the office of a bishop, the office of a deacon. It is often urged that in the New Testament such words signify functions, not offices. This is no doubt true in general—at any rate it is truer than the opposite statement would be—but it ought to be remembered that there were officers at Philippi called bishops and deacons when S. Paul wrote his epistle to that Church, and that was before S. Luke wrote the Acts. S. Luke cannot be supposed to have written in sublime unconsciousness of what had already happened in the Church before he put pen to paper. But in the order of development the need for a function comes first, and then, often, the performance of the function, and after its performance the appointment of a functionary and the definition of his office. This is the natural order in tentative work, and missionary work is tentative.

In the Primitive Church, prophets came next to

[1] Acts i. 20, 25.

apostles in order of importance and in the degree to which they filled the public eye. This is even more clear from such a text as 'Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone,'[1] than from the occurrence of the two titles first and second in the two lists in 1 Corinthians xii. 28, and Ephesians iv. 11. No one has ever supposed that they were elected, nor were they ordained. Apparently there were many who spoke in Christian assemblies of those days[2] (unless Corinth was a very peculiar Church), and gradually some were considered to be specially inspired by God. These were called prophets. It has lately been fashionable to say that the prophets belonged to a non-local ministry. The narratives of the New Testament do not, by themselves, establish this. We find prophets in the Church at Antioch,[3] and in the Church at Corinth ; the daughters of Philip were apparently settled at Caesarea.[4] We know that Agabus made one journey from Jerusalem to Antioch,[5] and, years afterwards, another from Judaea to Caesarea.[6] We know also that the bearers of the Decree of the Council at Jerusalem were prophets. One would scarcely infer from these data that the prophets were a wing or department of the missionary staff, whose special and normal business was itineration. After the Didache was rediscovered, scholars putting its evidence together with that of the New Testament, drew this inference with some confidence. While I have great hesitation in founding anything on the Didache—it is a book from a backwater of a very uncertain date—I have to add here that all Indians known to me, who have had anything of the prophetic character, have also had the roving spirit, and have not been suited by temperament to the local ministry. Of the value to a nascent Church and to evangelism of

[1] Eph. ii. 20. [2] 1 Cor. xiv. 26, 29. [3] Acts xiii. 1.
[4] Acts xxi. 8, 9. [5] Acts xi. 27, 28. [6] Acts xxi. 10.

such gifts as the Apostolic age called 'prophetic,' none who has watched the preaching of Sadhu Sundra Singh can doubt.

The facts of the Primitive Church were something like this. There were not two distinct grades, apostles and prophets. Most or all the apostles were prophets (this may be actually implied by the single article in Ephesians ii. 20 and iii. 5). Many prophets were not apostles either in the special or in the more general sense. But the power to speak out 'oracles of God' greatly impressed the early Church. The organised Church of later ages has persistently attempted to use (perhaps also to conceal) the prophets by giving the commission of its ordered ministry to men possessed of prophetic gifts. But the Primitive Church recognised in the prophetic gift a thing of intrinsic independent value, and reverenced it whether it existed in a man who performed no other function in the Church, or in an apostle or an evangelist or an elder.

It requires some imagination to envisage the joy and wonder with which a Jewish mind would have welcomed the reopening of the fount of prophecy, the recommencement of the great line which had been so long intermitted. We must recall the pathetic story of the profaned altar of the burnt offering which the priests under Judas Maccabaeus pulled down, and 'laid up the stones in the mountain of the house in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet to give an answer concerning them.'[1] This pathetic sense of helplessness finds a poetic echo in words more familiar to us, 'We see not our tokens; there is not one prophet more: no, not one is there among us that understandeth any more.'[2] And into this desolation broke John the Baptist and then 'Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.'[3] And the spirit of prophecy was liberally

[1] 1 Macc. iv. 42–6; cp. xiv. 41.

[2] Really 'knoweth how long,' Ps. lxxiv. 9. [3] Luke xxiv. 19.

poured out upon His followers. The restoration of prophecy was one of the surest signs of the new Israel, one of the most precious supports of its confidence.

One must also bear in mind the certainty that the Jewish Christian leaders, seeing the great prominence of prophets in the Christian Church, would ask themselves whether it was right for the new Israel to have prophets and no one corresponding to priests.

The first chapter of the Acts[1] makes quite explicit the missionary commission of the Apostles, therein agreeing with the record of the last chapter of St. Matthew,[2] and in both cases the commission is reported as being given by our Lord after His resurrection. But the report of this charge in S. Luke's Gospel[3] ends with the words, 'Beginning at Jerusalem.' This had, from the missionary point of view, a curious result. There are usually two well marked stages of missionary work, itinerating and stationary. The Apostles from the first had a stationary work going on in Jerusalem contemporaneously with their itinerating work outside, because from the first there was a Christian community in Jerusalem numbered by thousands. The effect of this on the development of the ministry was marked.

The Acts of the Apostles presents us suddenly with elders in the Church at Jerusalem, saying that they were the recipients of the alms which Paul and Barnabas brought from Antioch.[4] Later, these Jerusalem elders appear with S. James at their head. To what an extent he stood for the local Church of Jerusalem appears from the turn of phrase in Galatians ii. 12. No one knows how these elders were appointed. It is suggested that the Jerusalem Church imitated the constitution of the Synagogue.[5] It is suggested that James and his elders were the Christian counterparts of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. But

[1] Acts i. 8. [2] Matt. xxvii. 19. [3] Luke xxiv. 47.
[4] Acts xi. 30. [5] Cp. James ii. 2.

as it is not known how either the elders of a synagogue or the elders who composed the Sanhedrin were appointed, this does not really get us any further. Yet this is the one point in the New Testament evidence about what we now call ordination where there is not direct mention of the action of the Apostles. Is it reasonable to assume here popular election (which is not proved for the Synagogue elders or the Sanhedrin) and found a whole theory of the representative nature of the ministry and of its owing its authority to 'the Church' on this assumption?

It is not safe to rely much on Eusebius' statement that 'James received the bishopric of the Church of Jerusalem from the Saviour Himself and the Apostles.'[1] But, if it be a fable, it is a good deal nearer Scripture than the fable of democratic election, because Scripture records that our Lord appeared to James, and also that the Apostles made or controlled every other appointment that was made in the Church, except those of James and the Jerusalem elders. It is much more probable in itself that the settlement of the administration of the Church of Jerusalem was done by the Apostles than without them (or against them). And indeed one part of it we know to have been their work, the institution of the seven.

We have seen that the Apostles—if the first chapter of Acts rightly represents them—conceived their duties to be missionary embassage (ἀποστολή), supervision (ἐπισκοπή), and service (διακονία). Of the last division one department—the relief of the poor—became so large and difficult that it took too much of their time. Besides, the particular work was local and the ministry of the Word—they had been warned—would carry them into the uttermost parts of the earth. They therefore determined to entrust this part of διακονία to others, who were destined to be looked back to as the archetype of deacons. The Apostles took the initiative and asked

[1] Eus. vii. 19.

for a selection by the Church, but there is no democratic tone in their instructions. They indicate qualifications for the office. 'Look out seven men from among you of good repute, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we will put in charge of this business' (καταστήσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης).[1] There is no trace of democratic conceptions, no rights of the people to appoint their officers, answerable to them. The 'multitude of the disciples' selected suitable men, but the Apostles ordered the selection to be made, and the Apostles commissioned the selected. 'When they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them,' indicating that they were transmitting to the seven a part of their own διακονία and a share of their God-given power (charisma) of service.

Now if they did this, which cannot be doubted, is it not likely that they made similar provision for the permanent discharge of their other functions in Jerusalem? They had got to provide for ἐπισκοπή, supervision, there. They did it by the establishment of James and his body of elders. Very likely the Jewish High Priest and the Sanhedrin suggested this method of providing for supervision. Possibly also the arrangements of the Synagogue provided another precedent. Personal circumstances contributed something. The position of elder men who had actually seen and heard Christ and been His disciples when He was on earth would gain distinction with years, and they would be contrasted with the newer converts who could not lay claim to those advantages. The kinship of James to the Lord would also give him a peculiar position.

Without, as yet, determining offices by titles, the Apostles who could not always stay at Jerusalem as they did during the first persecution, provided for the ἐπισκοπή and διακονία of the Jerusalem Church by men who could do the stationary work there.

[1] Acts vi. 3.

When we turn to consider the itinerating work of the Apostles, we find that our information about the activity of the Twelve is confined to a few sketches of S. Peter's journeys in Palestine with a passing mention of S. John. There is, further, the story of Philip the Evangelist and his work at Samaria and his baptism of the Eunuch. The former implies that he was not independent of the Apostles, who came down to lay their hands on those whom he had baptised. The remark in the letter to Antioch, 'Certain which went out from us have troubled your soul with words . . . to whom we gave no such commandment,' implies either that they actually sent those people to Antioch, but without bidding them to teach the doctrine complained of, or that they might have sent such a party of preachers. S. Peter must have either gone to Corinth or sent evangelists or such persons thither. Andronicus and Junias may have belonged to another such missionary band sent out from Jerusalem.

But from none of this do we learn much that adds to our stock of information about the ministry. S. Luke, after indicating that the Twelve both did and supervised missionary work, concentrates upon S. Paul as the missionary *par excellence*. We must not, however, think of S. Paul and the Apostles as the only missionaries of the advancing religion. S. Paul is always accompanied. The Lord's principle of 'two by two' is faithfully followed. Paul's most notable companions are Barnabas, who is called an apostle, Silas, who was a prophet,[1] and Timothy, whom Paul himself calls an evangelist.[2] We hear also of persons who bore none of these names, but were simply called teachers.[3] This missionary body lived either like Hindu Sannyasis on the gifts of their hearers, or by their own ordinary professional work. Mohammedanism is carried to-day in Africa by the small traders, and the men

[1] Acts xv. 32. [2] 2 Tim. iv. 5.
[3] Acts xiii. 1; 1 Cor. xii. 28; cp. Herm. Sim. 9, 15, 4.

of Cyprus and Cyrene who evangelised Antioch may well have been Jewish traders who travelled there on business.[1] All this manifold missionary activity is quite familiar to us on the modern mission field. Christianity gets taken from village to village—sometimes to very inaccessible places—by people who are travelling on their own business, for example, to visit relatives. Many such people are very really 'teachers,' but one would not think of them as 'prophets,' and they have not given themselves up to be 'evangelists.' Persons judging the New Testament from the point of view of a Church in a Christian land are sometimes bewildered at the multiplicity of names for workers in the Church of the Apostolic age. But they are all existing classes of men and women in an actual missionary Church. Having glanced thus at the variety of missionary workers, let us return to S. Paul, the typical missionary leader.

The account in the Acts of S. Paul's activities is an account of several long journeys with two considerable residences at selected centres, Corinth and Ephesus. He founded local Churches, but he passed on to cover the ground, preaching as he went, and not making considerable stays till the Spirit showed him that he had reached a really important place, where a 'great door and effectual' was opened. All this reveals the well-known characteristics of itinerating mission work.

The methods which he followed in founding local Churches are repeated day by day in modern mission fields. The few new Christians in a town or village must, when the missionary passes on, be left in charge of the most earnest and trustworthy, who are already marked men by age or capacity. These will usually be found among the 'first fruits' of the mission, as Stephanas in Achaia.[2] They would not always be given a fixed or formal ministerial office, and this may be reflected in the use of unofficial

[1] Cp. James iv. 13. [2] 1 Cor. xvi. 5; Clem. Rom. ad Cor. xlii.

terms such as προϊστάμενοι,[1] principal men. These are used somewhat vaguely, and may be applied to presbyters[2] or to presbyters and deacons in common, or possibly to men who were neither. But the earliest actual reference to such a provision for a new local Church brings us at once to the famous word, elder. On S. Paul's first journey with Barnabas, on their return visit to the cities where they had made converts, 'after choosing for them elders in each city, and after praying with fastings, they commended them to the Lord on whom they had believed.'[3] The first word of this verse is χειροτονήσαντες, a word which had come to mean simply 'choosing,' without any necessary reference to election by show of hands by a multitude — for instance, Peter calls the Apostles 'witnesses chosen before by God.'[4] The subject of 'after choosing' and 'they commended' can only be *the Apostles*. This is true not only grammatically, but practically. The missionary must choose the persons who are to be responsible for looking after a very young community. Then we are introduced to elders at Ephesus in Acts xx. 17. Then we find S. Paul writing to Timothy and Titus to appoint elders at Ephesus and Crete respectively before they leave those places. In Titus i. 5 the word is καταστήσῃς a word used as we use 'make,' e.g., 'The King made Mr. Asquith Prime Minister,' or 'The King makes Prime Ministers.' Paul left Timothy behind in Crete to complete his own work of getting things right, and 'to make elders in every city.' It is noteworthy that neither to Titus nor to Timothy is anything said about stirring up the Churches to elect or ordain elders, or about exhorting them to choose the right men for the post. The list of qualifications for elders and deacons is given to Timothy and Titus to guide them, not the Churches, in making the appointments.

We know a little more about these appointments. S. Paul speaks to the elders of Ephesus of 'the flock

[1] Rom. xii. 8; 1 Thes. v. 12.
[2] 1 Tim. v. 17.
[3] Acts xiv. 23.
[4] Acts x. 41.

in which the Holy Spirit set you to be Bishops.'[1] Similarly he writes to Timothy of the prophecies which 'led the way to thee.'[2] The contents of such a prophecy may be illustrated from the words which the Lord in a vision said to Ananias about Paul himself, 'He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before nations and kings and children of Israel.' Similarly, later in S. Paul's life the Spirit indicated the moment for his itinerations to begin. 'While the prophets at Antioch were offering worship to the Lord and fasting,' the Holy Spirit said: 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Now all this indicates that the ordinations and missions were initiated not by any vote of the faithful but in accordance with prophetic admonitions. Of what kind these were, we may judge further by comparing S. Paul's statement, that 'the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and persecutions await me,'[3] with the only detailed description of such an event, Agabus' prophecy over S. Paul's girdle.[4]

One infers from all this that either the Apostles themselves or some prophet received and made known an intimation which they attributed not to their own judgment but to direct and purposeful inspiration, that such and such a person should be made an elder. One missionary in my diocese to-day decides on the ground of exactly similar monitions which of his catechumens or converts is destined to be the leader of the Christians in a village.

It should be admitted that this evidence excludes the hypothesis of popular election by the congregation as the method of appointing elders in the Gentile Churches in the apostolic age.

From this point we may pass to Clement of Rome. The elders at Corinth (S. Clement calls them ἐπίσκοποι) who had been turned out of their positions had been 'made' episkopoi 'by the apostles or afterwards by

[1] Acts xx. 28. [2] 1 Tim. i. 18.
[3] Acts xx. 23. [4] Acts xxi. 10, 11.

other notable men with the consent of the whole Church.'[1] 'The consent of the whole Church' may mean that it approved of the Apostles' and notable men's action afterwards, or it may mean that they consulted the Church before, as the Twelve had consulted the Church of Jerusalem before laying hands on the Seven. The whole sentence cannot mean that 'the whole Church' was the source from which these episkopoi had received their authority. Another passage of Clement has an interest for the modern missionary. 'Everywhere in the country and town,' he writes, 'the apostles used to preach and to make their first fruits, after proving them by the Spirit, into bishops and deacons for the future believers.'[2] This is precisely what we do to-day. The first converts in a place are pretty sure to be (some or all of them) people of courage and independence: and it is over and over again these 'first fruits' who become our clergy. They preserve to the end a certain marked position as the first converts and as the first to have responsibility over the growing Church.

The most famous passage in the letter of Clement of Rome, one point in which we have just noticed, must be quoted in full. 'Our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife about the dignity of the episcopate. For this cause then, having received perfect foreknowledge, they made' (or constituted, *κατέστησαν*) 'the aforementioned, and afterward they gave an additional regulation in order that if these fell asleep, other proved men might succeed to their ministration. Those then who were made (or constituted) by them or afterwards by other notable men with the consent of the whole Church, and who ministered blamelessly to the flock of Christ with humility, peaceably and modestly,—these we consider to have been unjustly thrown out of their ministration. For it will be no small sin

[1] Clem. Rom. ad Cor. xliv. The word translated 'made,' *κατασταθέντας*, is the same as that used in Titus i. 5. [2] *Id., ibid.*, xlii.

to us if we throw out of the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily offered the gifts.' Mr. C. H. Turner has discussed this passage at length in a recent publication,[1] and he has no doubt that while it says explicitly that the Apostles made arrangements for a succession of persons to perform the functions of the office of the episkopoi, it implies that Clement conceived of another succession acting as the Apostles had acted in constituting episkopoi.

This witness to the apostolic regulation of the Church by providing for the appointment of its settled ministry is a man who had seen Peter and Paul. 'Our Apostles' in the passage cited above must mean S. Peter and S. Paul, who, as Dionysius of Corinth says, were looked up to by both the Churches of Rome and Corinth as their special Apostles. He wrote at latest in 96. If so, he is telling us what he remembered of events which concerned himself amongst others and happened some 30 years before. On the other hand, Mr. Edmundson [2] has adduced weighty reasons for dating the letter in A.D. 70. If so, the regulation which Clement speaks of must have been still recent. But in any case Clement is a first-hand witness, and his evidence is not to be put aside by Harnack's short method of giving him the lie direct. 'To maintain that there was a command on the part of the Apostles is a momentous fiction.' [3] Such rough and ready methods do not make history: while imputing one fiction they make another. Dr. Vernon Bartlet and others have tried to turn the flank of the argument from Clement by assuming that the Corinthian Church, or its revolutionary party, had created other episkopoi: and then arguing that Clement never rebukes them for this and therefore they must, in his opinion, have had the power to do it.

[1] *The Early History of the Church and Ministry*, ed. Swete, pp. 111, foll.

[2] *The Church in Rome in the First Century* (Longmans, 1913).

[3] Harnack, *The Constitution and Law of the Church*, E. Tr., p. 94.

But *there is no evidence whatever that any new episkopos was appointed.* What happened is described as a Stasis or faction fight ; a word fatally familiar in Greek history. Presumably some episkopoi sided with the revolutionary party, and they served the Church after the expulsion of the others. At any rate it is impossible to treat as serious an argument which rests on an imagined event of which there is no evidence. Further attempts to read into Clement what is not there only witness to the importance of his evidence for the definiteness of Apostolical supervision and for the place which the episkopoi held at Corinth. 'In spite of the great importance of the officials, ideally and in the last resort authority rests with the flock itself,' writes Harnack.[1] Then follow four references, none of which prove the point. But the amazing thing is that the great scholar never stopped to ask himself whether anyone who wished to speak of a body of men as having the ultimate authority would have called them a *flock.* Has Harnack never seen a sheep, or spoken to a shepherd ? It must, I submit, be admitted in the long run that the Epistle of Clement confirms and corroborates the evidence of the books of the New Testament, that in the Gentile Churches with which S. Paul dealt, the Apostle had the initiative and the control over the appointment of the local ministry. And further, in this matter Clement couples S. Peter with S. Paul.

In this review of the action of S. Paul with regard to constituting a local ministry for the stationary work of the Churches which he founded, I have not dealt with the two names elder and bishop, presbyter and episkopos. To this matter I now turn. For the sake of brevity I will put my reconstruction of the history as a narrative.

When S. Paul and his colleagues first founded local Churches, they chose, as our superintending missionaries would to-day, elder men to take such responsibility as

[1] *The Constitution and Law of the Church,* E. Tr., p. 71.

they thought that they could carry. Hence the first notice in the semi-civilised communities of south-east Asia Minor is of the appointment of elders.[1] The word was already in use in Palestine, but it was more than a title. It is the fact that one has to choose elder men. They may not be of much account as teachers. 1 Tim. v. 17 implies that some at Ephesus did not 'labour in word and teaching.' But they must have character, and command respect. Gradually one sees that some can bear more responsibility. All have some measure of oversight, but some have far greater capacity for oversight than others. Thus in all probability (as Harnack sees), from the very first, some were given a degree of responsibility for oversight which made the application to them of the word episkopos something more than a description; it was a title of office. The general tendency of historical scholarship for some years has been to admit that, though all episkopoi were presbyters, all presbyters were not episkopoi. Yet it is very difficult to prove this from anything that is told us. The Pastoral Epistles contain the most direct references to these ministries, but their evidence is not clear. It is hard to make any distinction between the qualifications or work of the presbyter who labours in the word and teaching in 1 Tim. v. 17 and the episkopos whose qualifications are described in 1 Tim. iii. 2–6 and in Titus i. 7–9. It is possible to interpret the Apostle's direction as follows: Whereas in Crete Titus is to make presbyters, bearing in mind the qualities necessary for an episkopos, who will have to be chosen from among them, Timothy will find presbyters in Ephesus, and is only told the qualifications of an episkopos, as if he was concerned only with selection of men for promotion to that office. On the other hand, the Apostle may mean that the qualifications for eldership and episcopate are the same. In S. Paul's epistle to the Philippians the episkopoi only are mentioned,

[1] Acts xiv. 23.

coupled with deacons in the address. The persons who came from Ephesus to meet S. Paul at Miletus are called in the narrative presbyters,[1] but S. Paul in his speech exhorts them thus: 'Take heed to yourselves and all the flock over which the Holy Ghost put you as episkopoi, to shepherd the Church of God which He purchased with blood that was His own.'[2] Clement is concerned principally about 'the name' or dignity 'of the episcopate.' He also uses the word elders, usually with a stress upon their actual age, but twice at least as a title,[3] and in one of these places as a title of the same persons as he elsewhere calls episkopoi. It is very curious that the epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians speaks of presbyters, but not of episkopoi. Hermas mentions both names, but without anything to show their relation.[4] In the letters of Ignatius, which were written not more than seven or eight years after Clement's death in 101, we find the one monarchical bishop with his presbyters and deacons mentioned over and over again, except in the epistle to the Romans. All these facts are well known, and to them must be added that in the second half of the second century men began to compile lists of bishops in the great cities, Rome, Antioch, Corinth, etc., who are represented as successors of the Apostles.

The most important fact of all is that there is no consciousness of any break, or change of the Church's constitution, no revolution, no opposition to a revolution. What hypothesis can be framed of the course of events about which we possess this curious collection of fragmentary evidence? To be satisfactory, the hypothesis must explain why the change which seems so great to us seemed so little to contemporaries and the next genera-

[1] Acts xx. 17. [2] Acts xx. 28. [3] Chaps. xlvii. and liv.

[4] There is nothing to show whether there was one or more episkopoi at Rome in Hermas' day. Vis. 3, 5 refers to bishops in general, and so does Sim. 9, 27.

tion. I submit that the only condition which could have produced that result is that there was no serious change in *personnel;* the same persons must have gone on exercising authority; the new order must not have displaced respected leaders. Can we imagine how that condition could have been fulfilled?

There can be no doubt that, from the first, in each city there were several presbyters who were elder men. Nor is it really open to doubt that when they had been tested, as Clement says, supervision was entrusted to some of them, in some places possibly to all. Hence there came to be colleges of episkopoi in the various cities, say, as early as A.D. 60. In many of the Asiatic cities there was only one episkopos by 110. There were practically no colleges of bishops left by 150. How did this happen?

It is not enough to say that a college requires a president. This would not prevent the numbers of the college from being kept up. Nor is it enough by itself to say that there would be a tendency that one of the college should take the chief part at the Eucharist again and again. No doubt this helped, but it is not sufficient. More special causes must be sought, and they can be found. One of these was the great respect in which 'the first fruits of the Apostles' were held. No one wanted others to be put on a level with them. So that by preference, Church after Church went on till they had only one of the original episkopoi left. The others had moved to other places, or died, but so long as one of the 'original converts' remained at its head the Church was happy. This is what would happen in India to-day. The theory derives strong support from the mission of Timothy to Ephesus. It is clear that S. Paul did not contemplate the Ephesian Church appointing episkopoi for itself. Nor had the Ephesian Church done it. Some people there 'sought the office of a Bishop.'[1] If there was authority

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 1.

in 'the flock' to give it them, why had they not been made? But there was neither authority nor will. Therefore Timothy was left behind there with a commission from the Apostle to do what the Church neither had the right nor the will to do, to make bishops. The position thus given to the bishops or episkopoi made by apostles remained, till in many places only one was left.

Again, in some places an apostle settled down and did stationary instead of itinerating work. This might be for a time, or it might be permanently as old age came upon him.

If it be true, as it must be, that the Apostles appointed elder men to be presbyters and episkopoi, and they themselves became less able to travel with advancing years, natural causes would tend to reduce the episkopoi to one survivor in many places by the last quarter of the first century. The process would also have been hastened by the Neronian persecution. At some time between, say, A.D. 70 and 100, the authority of a great personality was thrown into the scale. Seeing the superiority of one head over a college of episkopoi, and seeing also that as the Church became more and more settled its stationary work had to be provided for, and remembering the successful example of stationary work under James at Jerusalem, John lent his great authority to fixing as the future permanent arrangement what had already in many places become fact. *Ordo episcoporum ad originem recensus in Ioannem stabit auctorem,* writes Tertullian,[1] about a century later. Similar testimony is given by Clement of Alexandria. 'It has been seen,' wrote Bishop Lightfoot,[2] 'that the institution of an episcopate must be placed as far back as the closing years of the first century, and that it cannot, without violence to historical testimony, be dissevered from the name of St. John.'

What was it that made the Church call the bishops the successors of the Apostles? It was partly that some

[1] Adv. Marc. iv. 5. [2] *Essay on the Christian Ministry.*

of them presided over Churches which apostles had planted or where apostles had ended their days. It was partly that they succeeded to the Apostles' duty of teaching the truth,—a succession which S. Paul deliberately planned: 'the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.'[1] But it was also because the duty of supervision (ἐπισκοπή) had passed from the Apostles to them. This was nothing strange or artificial. The itinerating stage of missionary work had passed when most of the towns, first in Western Asia Minor, then in Greece, then in Southern Italy, contained Christians. The stationary stage of mission work had begun. The apostle is the itinerating missionary: the episkopos is the stationary missionary. In the first century sometimes the same man was first one and then the other. In both cases he exercised ἐπισκοπή. The apostle's supervision and the bishop's supervision was the same: it was only their habits of life which differed.

If this be true, Dr. Lightfoot's famous antithesis loses meaning: 'The Episcopate was formed not out of the Apostolic order by localisation, but out of the presbyteral by elevation.'[2] Neither of these things happened, because in a sense both happened. A truer statement would be as follows: The ἐπισκοπή, the supervision committed by Christ to the leaders of His Church, passed from a group of men whose sphere was so far universal as travelling could make it, to a group of men, each of whom had his own sphere locally limited. But by that transition the essential nature of the supervision was no more changed than it was on the day when James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that the two should go unto the Gentiles and the three to the circumcision.

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 2.

[2] Cp. C. H. Turner, *Studies in Early Church History* (1912). ch. i., esp. pp. 22, 24.

This is the central point of the argument. History cannot be reconstructed without imagination and that imagination needs to be informed by experience. It needs also to be sensitive to the reality which lies behind names. It is to the criteria of experience in mission work and of the reality of spiritual facts that I would submit my argument.

One or two further points need treatment:

1. *Ordination to the local ministry* was, so far as the New Testament can tell us, confined in the Gentile Churches to apostles and their delegates. There is no reason *a priori* to suppose that Paul and Barnabas innovated in that respect. They had the settlement of the local Church at Jerusalem before them: probably they imitated it. But that we cannot prove. If it could be proved that the elders of the Jewish synagogues were really elected by the people of the place, then the 'Didache' (undoubtedly a Jewish Christian document) would represent the line of development from the synagogue, possibly through the primitive Jerusalem Church. One of its injunctions runs, 'choose to yourselves, χειροτονήσατε, bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord . . . . . for they also minister (λειτουργοῦσι) to you the ministry of the prophets and teachers.'[1] But even so, this line of development must be admitted to have ended in a backwater. The main stream ran in the channel marked out by the apostles for the Gentile Church. To that stream we return.

Clement of Rome says that Peter and Paul gave an injunction, or regulation, with the object of providing for a succession to the episkopoi who had been made by apostles and other notable men when those episkopoi fell asleep. What was this regulation? As Clement has not told us, we have no resource but to ask what actually happened. There is no doubt that the historical answer is that the rule came to be recognised universally that

[1] *Didache*, 15.

only bishops consecrate bishops or ordain elders and deacons. Now, what was the most likely regulation for Peter and Paul to make? Surely it was that those whom *they* had made bishops should make the future bishops, presbyters, and deacons. This was, after all, only adding another part of the work of supervision to those parts of it which they had already given over to the episkopoi. Suppose that they took this step, as well they might, at the outbreak of the Neronian persecution, the effect would be that after the persecution the power of ordination was found to be actually in the hands of one man in many places. As gradually the change from the colleges of bishops to the monarchical bishops came about, the power of ordination followed with it. As the Apostles themselves had caused the presbyters to join them in laying on hands when the presbyteral office was to be conferred,[1] the episkopoi continued to call for the co-operation of the presbyters in such ordinations.

If the 'additional regulation' of the apostles spoken of by Clement were what I have suggested, namely, that the then existing episkopoi should take the duty of ordaining other episkopoi and presbyters and deacons, it would allow episkopoi who were a college in one Church to continue the collegiate system by adding to their number before it became reduced to one. This may have happened in some places, for instance, possibly at Philippi. Duchesne thinks that some churches clung to the collegiate episcopacy for a considerable time. This would be consistent with the apostolical regulation, if it were what I have suggested. At the same time, there would be no constitutional break when they at last adopted the system approved by S. John and prevalent all around them. In regard to the Roman Church, is it not possible that the Apostles themselves left behind Linus, Cletus, or

[1] If that is the right interpretation of 1 Tim. iv. 14 with 2 Tim. i. 6.

Anencletus (whichever was his name) and Clement, as a college of episkopoi,[1] and that the dates afterwards assigned to their respective episcopates were the dates when, first, Linus presided in the college as the eldest, then, after his death, Anencletus presided, and, lastly, when Clement was the sole survivor? If so, and if the epistle to the Corinthians is to be dated in 70, Clement wrote it as the draughtsman of the college, a duty which is apt to be put upon the youngest. This also accounts for its anonymity, a fact which, in face of the excellent external evidence that he was the writer, is certainly curious, if he had the age and importance which he must have had in 96.

2. *The part of the people in ordinations.*—The so-called democratic character of the Church is to a great extent a mere unhistorical anachronism. The background of the New Testament is theocratic, not democratic. God was the King of the old Israel under the old Covenant. He is still the King of the new Israel under the new Covenant. He appointed to His Son a kingdom; so our Lord Himself has told us. Our Lord goes further, and says to His Apostles in the upper room, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'[2] That kingdom is (as we all know) both present and future, and the judgment is not to be confused with the last judgment. It is idle to say that the Apostles had no authority over the Church, still more idle that they owed their authority to the Church. They had it from the Lord: they owed it to Him; to Him they were responsible for its exercise. 'As my Father hath sent me, even so

[1] The leaders mentioned in Heb. xiii. 17 were, if the above suggestion is right, this college of episkopoi. The leaders of Heb. xiii. 17 were SS. Peter and Paul and their generation.

[2] Luke xxii. 29–30.

send I you.' They were not slow in drawing the inference that similarly they had to send others. This statement is very often contradicted in modern days. What then is the proof of it ? The laying on of hands is a very strong proof. To judge from the frequency of attempts to explain away the significance of the laying on of hands, it must be perceived to be a strong point in favour of the traditional view of the ministry of the succession. It therefore deserves a short digression.

The laying on of hands.—The Free Church writers, in the book somewhat optimistically called 'Towards Reunion,' repeat from Dr. Fairbairn that the laying on of hands is 'a Jewish symbol of spiritual solidarity between those praying and those prayed over.' This description is obviously too modern and too abstract, and also, as I shall hope to show, inadequate to the facts. If one wants to know what the laying on of hands means in the consecration of a bishop (or in fact in ordination at all) one must go back to Numbers xxvii. 18–20, a reference to which Cyprian had long ago drawn attention. 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him, and set him before Eleazer the priest and before all the congregation ; and give him a charge in their sight, and *thou shalt put of thine honour upon him* that all the congregation of the children of Israel may obey.'

'Thou shalt put of thine honour upon him' is the clue to the meaning of the imposition of hands in ordination. And generally the laying on of hands accompanies and symbolises a *blessing*, and, more than that, the giving of a blessing which he who lays on his hands possesses and he on whom the hands are laid does not. 'But without any dispute the less is blessed of the better,' as the Epistle to the Hebrews informs us (vii. 7). The description quoted above, 'a Jewish symbol of spiritual solidarity between those praying and those prayed over,' neglects the point

of transmission,[1] and the point that he who lays on his hands has something to transmit which the other is to receive. But these points are vital, and they are true of the laying on of hands, not only in ordination, but in confirmation, in reconciliation of a penitent, even in healing. God is of course the only author and giver of all blessing, authority, power, forgiveness and health, but when He uses men as the channels by which He confers these blessings on others, He chooses, as is fitting, those to whom He has already given the particular blessing, to pass it on to those who have not received it, at least in the same degree.

Election and ordination.—The Apostles then handed on the authority which they had received from the Lord, and the symbol of this transmission is the laying on of hands. And they realised (according to Clement) that they were founding a succession which would last; a succession in supervision (ἐπισκοπή) and all the authority which that implies.

But the records of the New Testament show in example and germ the place which really belongs to the multitude or the people or the flock in ordinations. It is that they should have an opportunity of taking their part in the choice of the person to whom authority over them is given by ordination. Writers to whom ordination means little or nothing often confound selection or appointment with ordination, but the New Testament does not do so. Selectors and appointers to ecclesiastical office have been almost infinitely various in the course of history: only the bishops (so far as the main stream is concerned) have ordained. There are proceedings in the Acts which explain the germ of later practice. It was 'the brethren,' apparently, who

[1] Dr. Driver's learned note on laying on of hands in the Old Testament (*Priesthood and Sacrifice*, ed. Sanday, pp. 39–40) concludes: 'The ceremony does seem to symbolize the transmission, or delegation, of a moral character or quality, or of responsibility or authority (or of power to represent another).'

'put forward' Joseph Justus and Matthias.[1] It was 'the multitude of the disciples'[2] who selected the Seven. This is the germ of what was to become usual in a settled Church. We have seen that in the beginning of their itinerant missionary work the Apostles themselves chose the elders. We have seen how monitions of the Spirit were expected to guide this choice. Clement of Alexandria says that S. John went about from city to city, his purpose being 'in some places to establish bishops, in others to consolidate whole Churches, in others again to appoint to the clerical office some of those who had been signified by the Spirit.'[3] This corresponds very closely with the witness of Scripture. But when the Church of Corinth passes into a more settled stage, the making of bishops took place, according to Clement, with the consent of the whole Church. The later history shows the election of a bishop by the diocese as for a long period normal. But this election was never conceived as making him bishop. The *Si quis* is the survival of the consent of the whole Church. The ideal of the Christian society is unity and concord. It is right, therefore, on the deepest principles that all its actions should be done with as much consent as is practicable. It would be thoroughly wholesome that the people should have more opportunity for selection of suitable persons for its ministry and for consent to their appointment. But this would never mean that the authority of the bishop or presbyter or deacon comes from the Church—in the sense of the 'multitude of the disciples.' It does not and cannot. It comes from the Divine Head, and is given when at the ordination the words are spoken and acts done on His behalf.

The minister is not the representative of the Church in the sense that a trades union delegate is a representative of his union. His authority does not come from the

[1] Acts i. 23. [2] Acts vi. 2.

[3] Clem. Al., *Quis div. salv.*, 42, quoted by Lightfoot, Gal.

Church. Consequently, it is a false and contorted view which finds expression in the following sentence of Dr. Vernon Bartlet: 'The ministry is really a representative one: *its authority was devolved on it by "the Saints,"* and in various matters, such as Church discipline, was exercised in actual co-operation with the Church assembly itself, *as the ultimate seat of such authority.*'[1] The clauses italicised by me are untrue to the Scriptural documents.

The Christian ministry is often representative of the Body of Christ in regard to its functions, but it is never representative of the contemporary Church on earth in regard to its authority. The authority of the ministry is always ascribed to Christ acting through the Spirit and through commissioned men.

[1] *Towards Reunion*, p. 200.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT IS A BISHOP FOR?[1]

One of the many old friends whom I met in 1919 in England was the bishop of a certain Australian diocese. He told me of his travels. On one occasion he came to a very out-of-the-way place, and as he knew that the people who had come in from the surrounding country intended to give him a reception immediately after his arrival, he changed his clothes before he reached the place, so that he arrived, not in his rough riding suit, but in an episcopal black coat, breeches, and gaiters. The reception duly took place, and he went to the house of an old settler to rest before a Confirmation. As he was lying down, he heard the following conversation just outside his window between a father and son who had come in from a back block. 'Dad, did you see the man with the rum clothes?' 'Yes, son.' A pause. 'Dad, who is the man with the rum clothes?' 'That's a bishop, son.' A long pause. 'Dad, what's the good of a bishop?' 'I'm damned if I know, son.'

Many English Church people, if asked the same question, would return substantially the same answer, though they might express it differently. The reunion problem is upon us; the historic episcopate is a vital element in

[1] This study originally appeared as an article in the January 1920 number of the *Bombay Diocesan Magazine*. I have not attempted to remove the signs that it had in view, primarily, an Indian audience.

it, and many of us have never reflected on the question: 'What is the good of a bishop?'

Some of those who have thought over the question ought to supply others with an answer. A bishop trying to give the answer himself must feel that it is a long self-accusation. To write down the main features of the ideal suggests a comparison with one's actual practice, which is humiliating. But for all that I will essay the task of explaining what a bishop is for, because the discussion on reunion reveals some deep misunderstandings and misapprehensions on this subject. More particularly in view of the discussion in India, I want to put out a clear picture of the traditional ideal of a bishop.

First, let me show the exact relation of the subject to the reunion problem.

1. *Reunion and Episcopacy.*—The most important steps taken towards reunion in recent years are the two Interim Reports made by a company of men in England consisting of bishops and other prominent men in the Church of England and leading Free Church ministers. The last of these reports had scarcely been published when another company of men, Indian ministers of our Church and of the South India United Church, began to meet at Tranquebar. This year,[1] this company agreed on a tentative scheme of reunion, speaking for themselves only as individuals and not as representing their Churches. They were afterwards joined in this scheme by some ministers of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church. Both companies have agreed that one of the conditions of reunion must be 'the historic episcopate.' Both companies consider that, in the words of the Second English Interim Report, 'the acceptance of the fact of episcopacy and not any theory as to its character should be all that is asked for.' On the other hand, the English

[1] 1919.

company goes a little further than this. Its first condition on this subject reads 'that continuity with the historic episcopate should be effectively preserved.' These words rule out any proposal that those sects which now have not an episcopate should make up the defect by suddenly appointing one to themselves. Further, the English company adds 'that in order that the rights and responsibility of the whole Christian community in the government of the Church should be adequately recognised, the episcopate should reassume a constitutional form both as regards the election of the bishop by clergy and people and the method of government after election.' This constitutionalism it justifies as primitive, and remarks that it exists at the present day in some parts of the Church. The whole movement for Diocesan Councils in our Church in India, which is now almost complete except in the Diocese of Madras, is an instalment of this reversion to primitive constitutionalism.

The English company concludes its notice of this subject with the words: 'It would no doubt be necessary, before any arrangement for corporate reunion could be made, to discuss the exact function which it may be agreed to recognise as belonging to the episcopate, but we think that this can be left to the future.'

Thus the English company considers that we can now accept the *fact* of the historic episcopate, that eventually we must agree on its *function*, but we need never agree on its *character*.

This is a most striking example of very cautious steering. And I am far from saying that it is impossible to steer the ship of the Church along this narrow course. Even at this moment in the Church of England a clergyman might say, 'I am as a matter of fact under the government of a bishop, and I allow him to do such and such things with me and to me, but the reason why I allow him to do

these things is very different from the reason why Mr. Jones allows the bishop to do the same things with him and to him.'

2. *The Character of a Bishop's Commission.*—Clearly we cannot get on far with the reunion problem till we have answered the Australian boy's question, 'What is the use of a bishop?' But the trouble is that it is impossible to answer it without having some conception of the *character* of the episcopate. On this latter subject there is at present a very strong division of opinion. On the one hand, the traditional Catholic view is that the bishops hold a commission from Christ Himself mediated by those who have been bishops before them, to do for the Church as much as they can of the work of the Apostles. From this point of view the words 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you' are applied all down the line of the bishops, and they give the character and the force of the commission of the bishops. The conception of the succession may have differed at different times or from one author to another, but those differences do not affect the conception which has been entertained of the character of the episcopate. On the other hand, there are numbers of persons who are either hypnotised by democratic ideals of government or nervous about the mediation of men in the transmission of divine gifts or apprehensive of being accused of believing in something magical. Such persons make a strenuous attempt to argue that the bishop is only an office-bearer, an official appointed by the Church, and owing all his authority to that appointment and to his representative character. But if one examines either Scripture or ancient Christian writings, it is impossible to conclude either that the representative character of the ministry is dominant, or even prominent, in them, or that the authority of the ministry is grounded on the theory that it is representative of the Church. However, I will not here argue that

point.[1] I will pass at once to a still more important one. The ancient Catholic customs connected with the making of a bishop give their proper place and proportion to both views of the character of the episcopate. In the third century, when a see was vacant some kind of meeting of the clergy and laity was gathered together, and, usually, any of the neighbouring bishops who could met in the same place. Names of suitable persons for filling the vacant see were proposed, it is not quite clear by whom. Testimonies to their character were given. The clergy and laity (probably together and certainly in a rather informal way) gave their 'vote' and thus indicated their choice of a man. The gathered neighbouring bishops then gave their 'judgment,' and, if it was favourable, they proceeded to the third step, the consecration. The election by the clergy and people made the new bishop representative of the place which he was going to govern —that is true, and incidentally that is why no one but bishops voted as of right in Provincial Councils, and yet they were representative of the Church of those days. The first step, the election, put the new bishop right with the local Church. The second step, the judgment of the neighbouring bishops, put him right with the universal episcopate—it signified their willingness to take him into their fellowship. The third step, the consecration, did an entirely different thing. It gave him the grace-gift, *charisma*, for the apostolate. But this gift comes of Christ alone, and it is Christ behind the consecrating bishops who gives it. Cyprian, who is quoted with such satisfaction by democratically minded Christians because of his references to the popular election of bishops—that same Cyprian says that the bishop is the 'vicegerent of Christ.' If his authority is to carry weight, that weight must attach to one statement as much as to the other.

[1] The point has been argued at length in Chapter vi. of this work on the ministry in the Primitive Church.

Now the Free Church contention seems to be that Christ acts through the Church because the Church is His Body, and so an appointment by the Church is an appointment by Christ. But the answer is that this might be true if one could get the whole Church to appoint, but it is uncertain of a local Church, and still more uncertain of one congregation in a locality. To meet the impossibility of collecting the whole Church and the uncertainty of any representation of it by casual local sections of it, the obvious expedient was the delegation to definite persons of the right to give commission. The commission of Christ could not be better symbolised or more naturally mediated than by the laying on of the hands of those who already hold it. The gift which the new bishop thus receives is the universal episcopate of the Universal Church for the special benefit of the local Church.

Let us sum up then the ancient procedure connected with Ordination. The chosen representative of the members of a local Church, whom they desire to rule over them, is accepted by the neighbouring bishops as a suitable member of their fellowship, the universal episcopate, and is consecrated by their ministry to be in that locality the successor of the Apostles and the representative of Christ who is the great 'Bishop and Pastor of our souls.' Through the prayers and the laying on of hands he receives the grace-gift, *charisma*, for that tremendous duty—that is, God's gift of the Spirit directed to enabling the bishop to fulfil that duty.

My point is that there is no contrariety or inconsistency in the two aspects of the bishop's character, nor is either untrue when combined with the other. He is both representative of Christ and representative of the Church. The only danger of misconception and error arises from the attempt to deny one of them. What concerns us here chiefly is the building of the Indian

Church—not the reform of the British or American—and in the Indian Church we are likely to find men gladly adopting this conception of the episcopate, for it strongly appeals to the inherited instincts of Indians.

3. *The Functions of a Bishop.*—From this point of view let me attempt to give a brief answer to the question, 'What is the use of a bishop?' From the early years of the third century there has been preserved a long prayer for the consecration of a bishop. It is connected with the name of Hippolytus. But whoever wrote it, it contains important evidence about the functions then attributed to a bishop. In this prayer, the first thing asked for the man who is to be consecrated is the Spirit of leadership (ἡγεμονικὸν πνεῦμα) which God the Father 'gave to His beloved servant Jesus Christ which He bestowed upon the holy Apostles.' And when the prayer goes on to enumerate the works of a bishop, it mentions first the work of a shepherd. It is too little remembered that in the Bible the characteristic functions of a shepherd are leading and ruling: it is the kings and rulers of Israel who are described by the prophets under the similitude of shepherds. Thus the first duty of a bishop is to be leader and ruler of the Church. In passing, one may recall the emphasis with which Mr. J. H. Shakespeare, in 'The Free Churches at the Cross-Roads,' deplores the hopeless want of leadership among the Free Churches in the late War, and deliberately contrasts the facility with which our archbishops and bishops launched the national mission. The same complaint appears again in Mr. Peck's book, 'The Coming Free Catholicism.' These testimonies may give pause to anyone who would urge that the Free Churches have got on very well without episcopal leadership.

This leadership of the bishops is altogether under the Good Shepherd, who is the Chief Shepherd. He has given the example of the leadership. He imparts the

power for it. He will be the Judge of its exercise. To Him and to Him alone the bishops, His assistant shepherds, are responsible. Parliament controls the Prime Minister, an adverse vote may terminate his authority in a moment. A diocese cannot similarly control a bishop. His authority is not derived from his diocese, but from his Master. But this, again, does not mean that the bishop's authority is an external, arbitrary, coercive authority, for the Chief Shepherd did not so exercise His authority. He Who was among His disciples 'as He that serveth,' He Who went about teaching with the refrain, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,' gave no example and no excuse for an arbitrary, overbearing, or coercive exercise of authority by His assistant shepherds. That respect for human nature and especially for human free-will which characterised all our Lord's actions should be a rule for the bishops, and even commonsense teaches that effective leading depends on glad and willing following. It is to secure this that a bishop ought to have his council or synod. This will enable him and his flock to act together in intelligent harmony. Through this the bishop can make known to all the flock his plans and wishes. From it he can gather whether the flock is ready to follow and support him. From it he will sometimes learn that the Spirit has stirred up a movement in his flock, at the head of which he ought to place himself. And though the council or synod cannot compel the bishop to do its will against his own judgment, it can, and ought, to show him whether he has succeeded, or is likely to succeed, in persuading the diocese to a course of action, and, if not, the bishop must hold his hand till he has succeeded.[1]

Thus the bishop's authority is constitutional, because

[1] Of course there is much to be said about the advantage to the people of taking their rightful part in the work of the Church, but that is another subject.

the Chief Shepherd leads a flock whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren, and His assistant shepherds have much more reason to use the members of their flocks as brethren. But those entirely misrepresent the bishop's office who compare him to the executive officer of a municipality who carries out the decisions of his employers. The bishop is not the executive officer of the council [1] in the sense that he has to carry out the council's orders, whether he approves them or not. He is the executive officer of the diocese, and carries out the policy on which he and his council have agreed. Again, those misrepresent the bishop's office who compare him to a Prime Minister who derives his authority from the confidence and support of the House of Commons. This would carry the consequence that the diocese could dismiss the bishop. But only some authority outside the diocese and superior to it can remove a bishop, and practically only for heterodoxy or immorality. Elected though the bishop ought to be by his diocese, he does not derive his authority from that fact, but from the commission of the Chief Shepherd on Whose behalf the consecrating bishops consecrated him. And his leadership is real leadership, though it is not lordship, but leadership of a kind which the Chief Shepherd Himself exercised and of which He said, ' As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.'

I have dwelt at disproportionate length upon the *leadership* of the bishop, because of the many and serious misunderstandings which are current about it. The remaining functions are not less important, though they will not need so much comment.

The second function of the bishop is the maintenance of the truth. The stress laid on this by the English consecration order is no less than is laid on it by Irenæus.

[1] The word *council* is used throughout this article because we have adopted that word for the present in India. But all that I have here said about councils, I should also say about synods.

For this work God was prayed and believed to confer upon the bishop the *charisma veritatis*, the gift of truth. The modern Church ought to remember this much more than it does, and to allow the bishops time to make themselves efficient guardians of the truth ; for, if they are to do this, they must give a very solid portion of their lives to continual study of the truth as it is in Jesus. They must continually explain it, continually defend it. Again, they must not be content to license men to preach it, they must themselves teach the teachers. Thus and thus only can they prepare themselves to exercise duly their historical prerogative of deciding questions of faith and doctrine.

The third function of the bishop is to be a constant intercessor for his flock. The Consecration prayer of Hippolytus expresses this in the petition ' that he may exercise the high priesthood unto Thee, blamelessly ministering night and day ; and that he may unceasingly propitiate Thy countenance and offer Thee the gifts of Thy holy Church.'

The fourth function of a bishop is connected with this third, but goes beyond it. It is that all Sacraments whatever are under his hand. He was in early days the normal minister of all, but that he should have been always the actual minister cannot even at first have been possible, and it became increasingly difficult. Still, though he cannot himself minister them, he remains responsible for seeing that they are duly administered by others. From this arises the *jus liturgicum* of the bishop—that is, his right to issue forms of service to be used in the public worship of the Church.

The fifth function of a bishop is that he should ordain those who are recommended to him by the Christian people as suitable for the ministry. He alone has this duty.

The sixth function of the bishop is that he is the custodian of the holiness of the Church. In antiquity he had the advice and help of the congregations in this,

and he ought to avail himself of this assistance still, as the bishops in India do by means of local *panchayats*. In modern days he is the ultimate judge of the questions, who must be excluded from the fellowship of the Church and who re-admitted to it.

The seventh function of a bishop is to be the ordinary channel of communication between his diocese and others. The letter of Clement on behalf of the Roman Church to the Corinthian Church is an early and prominent example of this. So the bishops came to be the links binding together the contemporary Church all over the world. In order to do this more effectively they soon began to meet, first in comparatively small local gatherings of bishops, then in larger ones. As things became more settled, these gatherings became distinguished into Provincial and Oecumenical Councils.

The eighth function of a bishop is care for the poor. This is why, in antiquity, the deacons, who undertook the administration of charity, stood in a specially close relation to the bishop. 'James, Cephas, and John,' when dividing spheres of apostolic labour with Paul and Barnabas, had expressed the wish that the Apostles of the Gentiles 'should remember the poor.' How an apostle should do this, the Twelve had already shown by transferring the administrative details to the Seven. A modern bishop often finds himself adopting similar methods.

The ninth function of a bishop is the leadership in evangelisation where evangelisation has to be done. Where he has to fulfil this function, he treads very obviously in the footsteps of the Apostles. And the presence of full apostolic authority in the midst of a company of missionaries has always been of great moment.

Some of these functions which have just been enumerated group themselves together, and from these natural groups of functions the episcopate receives its

distinguishing characteristics. From the first, second, fourth, and fifth functions combined it will be easily seen that the bishop stands in a peculiar relation to the clergy. They are, and always must be, his first care. They are his immediate colleagues. Most of his responsibilities can only be discharged with their willing help. The bishop must be ever ready to give them encouragement, support, advice, and help. When he reproves, it will be with a sad heart and lips more practised in praise. He must make them feel that though they have indeed definite official relations with him, those are coloured and characterised by the paternal and filial relations which the mutual helpfulness of many common experiences has set up. The clergy promise to give him 'canonical obedience,' that is, to obey him when he commands as enforcing the laws or canons of the Church. They also promise to 'follow with a glad mind and will his godly admonitions' and to 'submit themselves to his godly judgments'; and, where the relationship of paternal leadership is duly established, men never think of breaking those promises, even when they differ from the bishop's judgments.

Another group of duties, the second, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh, combine to produce another outstanding characteristic of the episcopate, which is the conservation of the unity of the Church. Thus shortly before A.D. 110 Ignatius presses upon almost every Church to which he writes that the bishop is the guardian of unity and his authority its guarantee. In his own diocese the bishop must be ever drawing men and women together, persuading co-operation, promoting sympathy and fellowship. The College of Bishops must by their own affectionate agreement and mutual consideration exemplify and preserve the unity of the province and finally of the whole Church.

A warning must be added in this bustling age. There is one condition on which their functions can be

fulfilled by the bishops. It is the same that the Apostles claimed for themselves. It is that they should be left free to give themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

4. *Constitutional Episcopacy.*—If one reviews these functions carefully, one is able to give a true sense to the recently invented phrase, 'constitutional episcopate.' It is misleading to substitute this phrase for 'the historic episcopate,' as has been done in the negotiations about union in South India. The substitution gives rise to the idea that something different is being proposed. There is, I believe, no chance that the Lambeth Conference would abandon the 'Historic Episcopate' for a 'Constitutional Episcopate,' which meant something different from the Historic Episcopate. But the Historic Episcopate is ideally, and for long ages has been actually, constitutional. Usually the modern writers about Reunion mean by the 'Constitutional Episcopate' that a bishop should be elected by the Church of the diocese, and should govern it with the help of a council or synod. This may be demanded as a legal minimum. Law in every sphere does well when it confines itself to laying down minima. Law is (as S. Paul is never tired of warning us) the antithesis of spirit. In a religion of spirit, law has a subordinate place. It is in its place when it confines itself to stating minima. By doing so, it may give useful indications of the direction in which duty lies. But the moment law attempts to lay down maxima or to define spiritual duty, it becomes a deadly poison. The constitutionalism of spirit will go far beyond the constitutionalism of law.

The bishop will realise that he has to act as head of a body, and no head can function without the co-operation of the rest of the body. This co-operation is required by the bishop for every one of the functions mentioned above. In regard to some of these, the way in which it can and should be given and used has already been sufficiently

indicated. Something may here be added with regard to the others.

For the defence of the truth every bishop ought to have near him and constantly to consult and use a group of learned men, such, for instance, as the staff of the Diocesan Theological College or, in England, the Cathedral Chapter. The intercessions of the Church are never confined to bishops or priests; and till they teach the whole body to intercede together with them, they have done little of their duty as intercessors. The direction of public worship and the exercise of the *jus liturgicum* require intimate contact with the ordinary worshippers, if they are to be thereby helped to worship. At the same time agreement is also required between the bishops of a province or a larger area, if the unity of the Church is not to be imperilled, though the attempt to guard against the latter danger by acts of uniformity has, in England, deprived the *jus liturgicum* of reality and the services of the Church of reasonable flexibility. In regard to discipline, S. Paul's co-operation with the Corinthian Church should be carefully studied, and it is very interesting as well as beneficial to return to his principles, as we already have done in India. Excommunication is a right and necessary medicine both for the individual who is an open and notorious evil liver and for the community to which he is a stumbling block. But unless the community is willing to carry out the sentence of excommunication, the sinner will not be impressed, and the tone of the community will not be raised or even maintained. The relief of the poor and the education of their children need the co-operation of the laymen who will do both committee work and personal work. Those who do undertake such duties are the real deacons of the Church, though we have unfortunately ceased to ordain them. One of the most necessary pieces of reorganisation for our communion is to set such work on a more primitive basis. The

ministers of the Word and Sacraments should not be used for it, but those who are used for it should be made to realise that they are doing an indispensable religious work in a definite relation to the Church.

But, in each and every case, absolutely necessary as co-operation is to the bishop's work, those who co-operate have not the same function as the bishop. None can share his responsibility, but he cannot bear his responsibility unless his fellow-workers lighten it by working with him. The isolated autocratic bishop is a caricature of episcopacy. The modern English practice is not true to the historic ideal. But the historic ideal is equally far from an elaborate constitution defining the 'rights' of the clergy and laity and the 'rights' of the bishop. Redeemed sinners have no rights; they are the slaves of their Redeemer. The historic ideal of the episcopate is a spiritual office with spiritual functions, met by a spiritual co-operation of the clergy and laity. Spiritual duties have no maxima. Bishop, clergy, and laity are bound simply to do all they can, 'girding themselves with humility, serving one another.' The bishop's leadership also is service. The whole spiritual enterprise is regulated, not by a paper constitution, but by the natural interdependence of the members of the Body of the Christ.

5. *The size of Bishoprics.*—What is the area in which the episcopate thus conceived performed its functions? It is often too hastily assumed that at the beginning and for a considerable time one city with its surrounding villages was the only known area of a bishopric. The Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, Dr. E. W. Watson, has recently drawn attention to the fact that this statement is incorrect.[1] A traveller journeying from Syria diagonally across Asia Minor to Constantinople and thence to the head of the Adriatic and along the Lombard plain to Milan would have passed in the earliest

[1] *The Church of England, its Nature and its Future*, pp. 26, 27.

Christian times through a regular succession of great sees. So also he would have done if he struck north from the head of the Adriatic to the Danube and followed along the northern frontiers of the Roman Empire. He would have found great sees the rule in Gaul and Spain, as later it always was in Britain. Taking places well known in our day, we may express the facts thus. Draw a line from Aleppo to Constantinople and thence to Venice and on to Marseilles, and thence over the sea to Gibraltar. This line will form an irregular arc. Within and south of this arc lay the region of city bishoprics. In well-nigh half the world the successors of the Apostles continued from the first to exercise their ministry like the Apostles under the condition of constant travelling. To this day the traditional dress of the English bishops recalls the fact that constant riding was once a characteristic of their work. Thus from the earliest times both large areas and small areas were presided over by bishops.

6. *Episcopacy compared with Committee Rule.*—Why not do all this work by committees? is a natural question to a modern mind. The answer is two-fold. First a psychological answer. You can never get the same quality of responsibility out of a committee as out of a single person. The second is theological. The Church is not and cannot be democratic in essence, for it has for its Head a King Whose position is absolute and unconditioned, Jesus Christ. And the structure of His Body, as it has grown more and more definite, has reflected this essential fact in it, the monarchy of Christ. From time to time, as men's fancies in political government have changed, the contemporary Church has given a more autocratic or a more constitutional interpretation to episcopacy. But episcopacy remains as an essential element in the structure of the Body of Him Who is its King and also has not been ashamed to call His members brethren.

I have written this article as a contribution to the consideration of the union of Indians in one Church of India. I present this picture of the traditional episcopate with confidence to Indians. Their genius is not naturally democratic. They incline of themselves to episcopacy, and while they are considering the future constitution of the Church in India, it is important that they should have before them the largest, richest, and truest views of that great gift of God to His Church, which, whatever may have been the failures of men in using it, will always contain the greatest possibilities for its good government.

A further statement may be opportune on a subject which was referred to somewhat cursorily in the above article.

7. *The Authority of the Bishop; its Nature and Limitations.*—If the general line of my argument be correct, the bishop has an authority derived from Christ, representative of Christ's authority, and to be exercised as He exercised His. It is an authority over the Church. It is an authority which, if it must not dictate, cannot be dictated to. This balance is represented in a quasi-legal form by the provisions of our Conciliar Constitutions, by which in the diocese bishops, clergy, and laity must agree in passing anything, and in the province the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy, and the House of Laity. This is not democracy, but it is not autocracy. It is a combination of elements of both, which no political constitution exhibits. For its success it depends on the love and selflessness which should be characteristic of Christians and on the dominant sense which ought to possess them of their relation to

their unseen Head and their absorbing pre-occupation in the interests of His Kingdom.

Now, though there is no doubt that the genius of India tends towards episcopacy, there are Indians who have learnt the foreign doctrines of democracy and the practice of committee work, and express an adherence to democratic principles. In the political sphere this is because, at the moment, democratic arrangements offer a way of escape from what seems the autocratic rule of Englishmen. That motive may have something to do with the somewhat similar outbreaks of democracy on the part of a few Indian Christian leaders. To some of them, again, Presbyterian government is familiar and commends itself; and at the same time they still think that episcopal government is essentially autocratic.

Last year (1919) Mr. K. T. Paul, the able General Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in India, in a published letter, stated that in order to enter into union with the South India United Church the Anglicans must carry through three changes:

(1) 'Disestablishment of the Church in Madras, if not in India.
(2) 'Election of Bishops by the Council.
(3) 'Revision of the Constitution so as to make the Bishop the executive officer of the Council and not its ruler as at present.'

The last clause shows a serious misunderstanding. The bishop is not the ruler of the Council at present; he has to gain its consent for each measure. But he is the ruler of the Church in the sense of head and shepherd after the model of Christ, and he cannot be put under the Council without denying this altogether.

This does not, however, mean that the bishop is above the Church law. Where the whole Church, or the Church with which he is immediately connected, has made laws,

he has to rule according to them. They are (if rightly framed) expressions of the mind of Christ cast into the form of general rules. Canonical obedience means exactly that the bishop has a formal and legal right to obedience from the clergy when he is enforcing existing Church law. On the other hand, he has a moral right to the obedience of his clergy when he gives them 'godly admonitions,' which (according to our Ordinal) they promise to 'follow with a glad mind and will.' Further, in regard to Church law the bishops exercise a dispensary power which should obviate the injustices and absurdities which must follow in particular cases from rigid adherence to general rules.

The order for the consecration of bishops in the English Prayer Book contains some nine phrases which are absolutely inconsistent with the idea that a bishop should be the executive officer of a synod or council, and there are corresponding phrases in the orders for the ordination of priests and the making of deacons. In this our Ordinal reflects the traditional view of the episcopate. The essence of the episcopate is a personal authority; and Church custom and Church law have agreed in leaving a great deal to his personal discretion, personal judgment, and personal initiative.

This brings us down to the bedrock. What is the Church founded on? Personality. What does it live upon? Personality. It lives on the Personality of our Lord. It also lives by the personality of those who are chosen to image forth visibly His Personality in their generations. From Peter downwards these lower personalities are the rocks on which the Church is founded. It is their personal power, derived from the Spirit, and given unusually free scope for exercise by receiving the authority of Shepherds, which enables the Church to have elasticity and adaptiveness with respect for tradition, equity, and reasonableness with fixed principles, life and variety within an ancient system. That is the ideal;

that is the plan. We may fail. Judas did. He had been appointed by Jesus Christ Himself. But no one in the world condemns our Lord's plan of the Apostolate because of Judas' failure.

The Church lives on Personality. Can Protestant Christians have read S. Paul so long and never understood him? What does he mean by the contrast of the Law and the Spirit? He means simply that Judaism tried to live on regulations and a written constitution and failed. Christ came and offered Personality for men to lay hold of and live by, and in Him we succeed and live. In the language of our Lord and S. Paul, faith is nothing but trust in a Person, one spirit laying hold of another spirit. The Church has worked through Personality all down the centuries. It has made the most of Personality. It has given the selected personalities an unequalled scope by the commission which the bishops receive to represent the paramount Personality.

The life of the Church depends upon persons and not on rules. This is no accident. It follows from and symbolises the essential nature of Christianity. True, the judgment of the few great men and the experience of the many little have crystallised into rules: and these rules are of the greatest assistance to all who are called for a few brief years to carry on the work of administration. But where the rules are most numerous and most rigid, as in the Roman communion, there dispensation is most freely and most frequently used, and everywhere whole classes of administrative detail are left to the absolute and final discretion of persons.

CHAPTER VIII

THE 'VALIDITY' OF SACRAMENTS

1. *The word 'validity'* is the abstract noun of 'valid,' and 'valid' ought to mean 'having power.' It is specially used of proceedings which have the power or force that they pretend to have, for example 'a valid election,' 'a valid adoption,' or of things which similarly have the force or power to which they lay claim, 'a valid will,' 'this ticket is valid for six months.' Thus the word has an implied reference to a claim which may possibly be disputed, and signifies that the claim, if disputed, could be made good.

It is an unfortunate word to have applied to Sacraments. It is rightly distinguished from 'regular,' because a thing is not necessarily of force because it is regular, though, in matters of law, it is ordinarily true that a thing must be regular in order to be of force, or valid. The word valid has not quite the same implications as *βέβαιος*; the word which has been made famous in this connexion by Ignatius' dictum, *ἐκείνη βεβαία εὐχαριστία ἡγείσθω ἡ ὑπὸ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον οὖσα ἢ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ*.[1] (Let that be considered a sure Eucharist which is under the bishop or some one to whom he entrusts it.) *βέβαιος* means *sure and certain*; the Greek for *valid* is *κύριος*. Of course things which are valid may get called *βέβαια* because they are so; but the real sense of *βέβαιος* is more general.[2]

[1] Ad Smyrn. 8.

[2] For the N.T. cp. Rom. iv. 16 and Heb. ii. 2 with Heb. ix. 17, in which last place only does it approximate to 'valid.'

2. *The phrase 'The validity of the Sacraments'* in the modern controversial theology has been given two special turns of meaning.

(1) A valid Sacrament is sometimes understood to mean a Sacrament which actually conveys the divine grace which it is expected to convey. When applied to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and put in the plainest language, it is said that when the Sacrament is 'validly' celebrated the Bread and Wine become the Body and Blood of our Lord, but when it is not 'validly' celebrated they remain simply Bread and Wine.

(2) Bishop Gore and others give a different explanation of their use of the words a 'valid Sacrament.' In substance it would be this, 'a valid Sacrament is one in which I can be confident that I shall receive the covenanted grace of God which He intended to give me in that Sacrament.' They find this in the Sacraments ministered in the Catholic Church by ministers duly ordained in the succession from the Apostles. What is to be said of Sacraments ministered by others it is not their duty to decide, and by calling them 'invalid,' they would not be understood to make any such decision; they only mean that they could not be *sure* that, if they received such Sacraments, they would receive the sacramental grace which they desire. It may be reasonably contended that such a position corresponds closely with the real meaning of the word *βέβαιος*, that is, 'secure' rather than 'valid.'

Again and again one reads in the writings of the Free Churchmen very impatient references to the agnostic attitude with regard to the Sacraments as ministered by them which Bishop Gore and others following him take up. They repudiate for themselves the position of being left to the 'uncovenanted mercies.' They claim from us that we should declare our position in relation to their Sacraments. If we really mean to have anything to do with them, we must (they say) be able to make a more

definite statement about our views concerning the Sacraments which they minister. To go on saying *we don't know* seems to them very much the same as saying *we don't care.*

A third position has also been taken up. Some Churchmen in England have adopted the position that the ministries and sacraments of the Free Churches are 'valid for these Churches.' So far as Sacraments are concerned, since Sacraments are 'Sacraments of the Gospel' or 'Sacraments of the Church,' there is no meaning from any Christian or Catholic point of view in a Sacrament which is valid for *a* Church. It must have a universal character, or it is not a Sacrament as ordained by Christ or as received by the Catholic Church.

It is pretty clear that at this level the whole discussion is unprofitable. If we wish to make any progress we must go back to more ultimate principles.

3. *Scope of the following study.*—In the following study not more than an outline of some leading considerations is attempted. No one can be more conscious than the author both of its omissions and its defects. Yet it seemed worth while to attempt to survey the subject from a point of view a little further back and perhaps a little higher than controversial literature sometimes takes.

4. *What happens in a Sacrament.*—S. Thomas Aquinas defines a Sacrament as a sign of a sacred thing, but not of any sacred thing whatever, but only of some sacred thing which sanctifies men. We tend to think rather of a Sacrament as an act in which through a sign a sanctifying grace is conveyed to men. (There is no difference of theory here, but the actual usage of the word Sacrament has shifted a little.)

An act implies an agent or agents. In a Sacrament the primary agent is God. He alone is the Author of grace. He alone can start grace flowing. From Him are all

things, more particularly all holy things. He is the only Source or Origin of any importance in religion. But in a Sacrament there is also a secondary agent, the Church of God. Now to the Church He has entrusted the continuation of His Son's work of bringing grace and truth to bear on the world. But the Church is not a multitude of undifferentiated units: it is a body; and a body implies differentiation. Nor is it an independent body. It is the Body of Jesus Christ, Who is its Head. In a natural body, the mind, which we think of as acting through, and in a sense typified by, the head, decides what to do and does it by means of some member which it selects. The mind does not select at random. It selects the member which is, by its nature and constitution, most fitted for the action. For instance, it uses a hand rather than a foot to pick up something. But in this action other members or the whole body must co-operate passively or actively, allowing or helping the member particularly employed to perform the action. The Body of Christ which is the Church differs from a natural body of a man or animal in that its members have a more independent existence, possessing not only powers of sensation, but of reflection and choice. Yet, with the appropriate modifications, the principle stated above holds in the Body of Christ. Christ as the Head, or (may we say for the moment ?) the mind, of His Body has chosen and continually chooses certain members for certain actions, and through those members He performs those actions. If then the Body of Christ is the secondary agent in a Sacrament, there is a tertiary agent, the member of that Body who has the special function of carrying out the special act necessary, and he has that special function by an act of God's will. He is the minister of the Sacrament.

To sum up then. A Sacrament is an act. In this act, God is the primary agent, His Church the secondary agent, a minister the tertiary agent. Further there are the

person or persons for whom the act is done, who by it receive a certain grace.

5. *In a Sacrament the Church acts not only for God, but in response to Him.*—We must now add that the Church does not act only as the commissary of God for the giving of grace. It acts in another way also. It does not only act on behalf of God : it acts on its own behalf in response to God's action. In Baptism it conveys to the baptised God's will to adopt one more son or daughter, and also, in response to this act of God, it receives into itself one more member of its body. In the Holy Communion it makes ready the conditions in which Jesus Christ gives Himself to His members, but also it takes its part with its Head in offering before God the one perfect and sufficient sacrifice which Jesus Christ made by an act of eternal significance and offers eternally. Thus in each Sacrament the Church performs two acts, one for God, and the other before God. In the act of the Church for God the minister is the member selected from the body to be God's instrument. In the act of the Church before God the minister is the Church's spokesman. In the first he is God's representative, in the second the Church's representative. Naturally we should expect God to choose His own representative. So He did when He chose to send His Son. So He did when His Son chose His Apostles and sent them. So He did and does when the Apostles chose and sent their successors, and their successors chose and still choose others to succeed them as God's representatives. Naturally again we should expect the Church to choose its representatives. But it chooses only in a restricted sense, as a divinely formed body might be said to choose, the members which should be its representatives in certain acts. The mind in the natural body chooses the tongue to speak for it, because God has put it into the body (ἔθετο ἐν τῷ σώματι)[1] and fitted it for speaking. It chooses the

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 18.

hand to lift for it, for a similar reason. So we read in S. Paul that 'God *put* in the Church [1] (ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ) first apostles, secondly prophets, third teachers,' etc., and similarly 'God *gave* some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be shepherds and teachers,' [2] etc. The Church chooses to use as ministers those whom God has chosen to make suitable for those ministries. The attitude of the Historic Church towards this doubly representative character of the minister has always been that the successors of the Apostles, leaning on the guidance of the Spirit, commissioned men to be God's representatives in the ministry of His grace and the Church accepted those same men as its representatives before God. Sometimes indeed it selected these men as suitable for the commission and put them up to be commissioned. But this was not enough. The commission had to be given before the men could act as the Church's representatives before God. It should be noted that the opinion often expressed with one-sided vehemence in the Free Churches that ordination is nothing but the Church's recognition of God's choice of a man for a minister, shows that in their opinion ministers are not representatives of the Church because the Church made them representatives by election, but because God fitted them to be so by endowing them with special qualities, and the Church chose to use them for the purposes for which she finds them to be endowed.

6. *The ideal conditions of a Sacrament.*—We may now pass on to picture to ourselves the ideal conditions of a Sacrament. God wills to give the grace, through His Church as the sphere of His operation, by His chosen minister as an instrument in His hands, to a person or persons meeting it with faith. At the same time the Church is not simply empty space in which God acts unaided. The Church is a spiritual being, which co-

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28. [2] Eph. iv. 11.

operates with God by willing what He wills to do in it. And the minister is not an inanimate instrument, but a rational spiritual being who also wills what God is doing by him. Again, in their response, the Church and her spokesman or minister will respond to God's gracious action whether by receiving the newly adopted child of God as a new member of their society, or by offering before God that sacrifice which indeed is in itself complete but in which they must take their own share and part.

Such, in mere outline, is the ideal of the conditions of a 'valid' Sacrament, a Sacrament which has power.

7. *The problem of invalidity.*—The purpose of this statement of the ideal conditions of a Sacrament is that it enables us to state the problem of invalidity in a clear way. The problem can now be stated thus: Does the failure of any of these conditions prevent the grace of the Sacrament from reaching the would-be recipients?

We may glance at the answers to this question which have been made in some instances where virtual agreement has been reached.

(*a*) Conditions touching the recipient.—Where the faith of the recipient fails, there is no failure on the part of God, the giver of grace, but the grace really given is not received to the full—that is, its action on the recipient is conditioned by the extent of his failure of faith. But when he awakes to faith, he finds the grace waiting to fill him. Similarly with regard to impenitence in the recipient. His impenitence hinders him from being benefited by the grace really given, but if he awakes to penitence, the grace is waiting to strengthen him.

(*b*) Conditions concerning the minister.—Much has been argued about the intention and also about the unworthiness of the minister. But there is again virtual agreement, that as the minister is only an instrument, if he is duly commissioned and is acting for God according to God's will, and for the Church according to the Church's

intention ('doing what the Church does') neither his defective intention, nor his unworthiness hinder the flow of God's grace to the recipient or the flow of the Church's obedience and devotion towards God. We will reserve the condition 'if he is duly commissioned' for the present.

(*c*) Conditions concerning the Church.—It has always been conceived that the whole Church must be acting in and through the congregation present at the particular celebration of the Sacrament. Though the defect of heresy in the minister was also in view, it was principally on account of the separated position of the heretical congregations that Cyprian and his con-provincial bishops sought to set aside heretical baptism. Since those congregations were outside the Church, the whole or Catholic Church could not be acting in or through them, nor could they receive the baptised into the Catholic Church. The African conclusion was resisted by Stephen of Rome, and the judgment of Catholic Christianity has followed Stephen. Augustine became the great exponent of the Catholic view. So far as I understand the argument of that Father, it was that though the minister who performed the Baptism was a heretic and separated from the Church, and though the congregation which received the baptised person through its minister was heretical and separated, yet neither of these things could prevent God from giving His grace through His ordinance of adoption, but they did prevent the grace, thus really given, from profiting the baptised person, till he became united to the other adopted children of the one Father, and sanctified in the unhindered love of the united family. While he remained in heresy or separation, the sonship of God which the baptised person had sought and God had given did not profit him, just as it would not have profited him if he had come to Baptism impenitent. But, when he came into the living unity of the Church, he found the grace of his Baptism waiting to work upon him.

In regard to the Holy Eucharist, S. Thomas Aquinas[1] considers the case of a Catholic priest who becomes a heretic, and celebrates that Sacrament for heretics. His decision is that the heretical priest really consecrates the Sacrament, but it does not convey the virtue of the Sacrament to those who receive it. In other words, he follows S. Augustine's line about Baptism: the grace of the Sacrament is present but in those conditions not profitable.

It is now time to take up the subject of the commission of the minister in reference to Sacraments. The general principle of the primitive Church was that both the Sacraments which we are here specially considering, Baptism and the Eucharist, were to be administered by ordained persons. The sense of orderliness was very strong. There is every sign that Ignatius' principle was really current, early and generally. The Sacraments were committed to the bishops and they gave commission to the presbyters to administer them. The matter had not the isolated prominence which recent controversy has given it. It was assumed as a part of the undisputed body of Church order. It was the right way of doing the thing, and nobody doubted it.

Baptism by lay persons was allowed in case of necessity, rather than that a person ready for Baptism should die unbaptised. In spite of a passage written by Tertullian in his Montanist period, there does not seem any good evidence that it was thought right for laymen to celebrate the Eucharist even in cases of necessity. Nor can it be established that prophets were regarded as having an inherent right to celebrate the Eucharist.

But on the other hand there was a time, that of the early persecutions, when a confessor who had actually been sentenced or imprisoned was reckoned among the presbyters without laying on of hands. With the Decian

[1] *Summa*, 3, 82, 7.

persecutions the number of the confessors increased and their quality decreased, and confessorship became only a qualification for ordination.

If we may presume to guess at the meaning of the early custom about the confessors, we may say that the confessors must have been regarded as having been made partakers of the sufferings of Christ as no one else had been or could be. It seemed therefore congruous that they should stand as His representatives when the benefit of His sufferings was to be applied to the faithful. We may also recall S. Peter's words, 'He that hath suffered hath ceased from sin,'[1] and how they are echoed in Hermas;[2] and we may imagine how, on that showing, confessorship brought a man near to the High Priest, 'holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners,'[3] whose sacrifice the priest at the altar commemorates. This did not seem to the Church any reason for departing from the accustomed mode of ordination in other cases. That was the mode which God had pointed out through the Church as His ordinary method of constituting men His representatives. If He chose to add to it an extraordinary method, the promotion through confessorship, it was accepted, but only as long as the evidence for it was felt to be irresistibly certain.

The attitude taken up by S. Thomas Aquinas may be indicated, because its difference from our habitual way of speaking is instructive. To him bishops are the successors of the Apostles, but this fact does not take a prominent place in his statements about ordination. Nor does the theory of the succession. About the Sacrament of Orders we read[4]:

> What is conferred in other Sacraments is derived only from God and not from the minister who dispenses the Sacrament; but that which is made over (*traditur*) in this

[1] 1 Peter iv. 1. [2] Herm. Sim. 9, 28, 3.
[3] Heb. vii. 26. [4] *Supplement*, 34, 5.

Sacrament, that is to say, spiritual authority (*potestas*), is derived also from him who gives the Sacrament, as imperfect authority from perfect.

The bishop alone can confer Orders. This is argued without any reference to the Apostolic Succession.[1] It is grounded on the general principles of Church constitution. As politics are to the other sciences, so is the bishop to the divine ministries; he has to decide the functions and duties of each ministry and set men to do them. The objection raised that as priests lay on hands in ordination, ordination cannot belong to the bishop alone is met by the answer that in the imposition of hands is given the grace by which men become fit to execute the duties of their Order but not the 'character.' The 'character' of the priesthood is conveyed by the delivery of the instruments (a ceremony, I may note in passing, for which we know no evidence before the tenth century), and only the bishop delivers the instruments. In general Thomas contents himself with alleging the existing Church arrangements. Of course the 'Supplement' is not Thomas' work as it stands; it was the completion of his 'Summa' by other hands from what could be found in treatises which he had left behind. But we have Thomas' own deliberate statement of the question whether the consecration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is the special function of a priest.[2] The conclusion is:

> Since the Sacrament of the Eucharist cannot be effected except in the person of Christ, the priests, to whom this authority (*potestas*) has been given, have it as their special function to effect it (*illud conficere*).

Thomas argues that a man who does anything in the person of another must have authority given to him by that other in order to do so:

> As to the baptised person is given by Christ authority

[1] *Supplement*, 38, 1. [2] *Summa*, 3, 82, 1.

to receive this Sacrament, so on the priest when he is ordained is conferred authority to consecrate it in the person of Christ. For through this he is placed on a level with those to whom was said by the Lord, 'Do this in remembrance of Me.' [1]

In the answer to the objections it is further urged that the consecrative power (*virtus*) belongs *both* to the words of consecration *and* to the authority delivered to the priest at ordination when the bishop says, *Accipe potestatem offerendi in ecclesia sacrificium tam pro vivis quam pro mortuis.* Also in regard to the priesthood of all Christians, it is said that this means that the layman offers spiritual sacrifices such as are indicated in the words, 'The sacrifices of God are a troubled spirit' [2] and 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice' [3] and 'A holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices.' [4] Further, the reception of this Sacrament is not of such necessity for salvation as the reception of Baptism, therefore the fact that Baptism by lay people in case of necessity is permitted does not make consecration of the Eucharist by lay people permissible. Here it is implied that Christ speaks in every ordination to each priest empowering him to 'act in His person,' or, to use the language employed earlier in this study, to be His representative, in the Eucharist. But this is not connected explicitly with the succession in the ministry.

The general view of Thomas about the relation of the commission of the minister to the Sacrament of the Eucharist is that a commissioned minister is necessary to the Sacrament, but he views the commission as a part of the great customary order of the Church. God has made known His will through the custom of the Church that the commission to the priesthood should be given by ordination at the hands of a bishop. That commission is nothing less than the commission of Christ to the priest to act for Him in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

[1] Luke xxii. 19. [2] Ps. l. 19. [3] Rom. xii. 1. [4] 1 Peter ii. 5.

The Middle Ages added phrases and ceremonies to the Ordinal in order to bring into a new prominence the power to celebrate the Eucharist amongst the other powers of the priesthood. These phrases and ceremonies appear and are emphasised in Thomas' argument. But, apart from these, his position is probably not far from the position of the early Church. To it, as to him, episcopal ordination appeared to be an indisputable part of the customary order of the Church. It was God's way of conveying His choice of those who were to be His representatives as ministers. God has shown that it was His chosen way by immemorial Church custom. The succession in ordination from ordainer to ordained and from consecrator to consecrated was going on all the time as a fact. But it may be that we cannot find before the Reformation any explicit insistence on the meaning of the succession, as conveying the commission of Christ from hand to hand. I would desire to speak subject to correction, but so far as the evidence is known to me, it goes to show that no Catholic is called upon out of deference to the beliefs either of antiquity or the Middle Ages to maintain that it is *necessary for the validity* of the Sacrament of the Eucharist that it should be celebrated by a priest ordained by bishops in the episcopal succession. What he is called upon to maintain is that for anyone else to celebrate it is a breach of Church order, and unpleasing to God Who is 'not a God of confusion,' and that this breach of Church order has been in the past both a sign of a schism made and a means of maintaining schism. The argument that if a non-episcopally ordained man celebrates the Eucharist, the bread and wine will not become the Body and Blood of Christ was not adduced by S. Thomas, because he was too clear-headed to use an argument for which there was no authority in antiquity nor ground in logic. There is no logical passage from the one idea to the other. But on the ground of

the custom and order of the Church, he knew he was safe. This argument is much less impressive to a disorderly age like ours, but we must not give way to the temptation to use bad arguments because they are impressive.

The most that we can say about the effect of the ministration of an unordained or irregularly ordained man upon the Sacrament of the Eucharist when he celebrates it, is that we are afraid God might restrain the flow of His grace in such conditions, though we cannot tell in what particular way He might do so.

8. *Sacraments administered by non-Episcopal Ministries.* —It is clear enough that the Historic Church would say that the right way to have Sacraments celebrated is by episcopally ordained ministers, though Baptism may in case of necessity be administered by lay persons. Where the sense of order was so strong, it would have seemed absurd to be asked 'What will happen if we don't do things in the right way?' The obvious answer is 'Why should anyone do things in the wrong way?' But we who hold the historic evidence to be conclusive that the right way of conducting the Sacraments is to have episcopally ordained ministers to do it, are faced with the fact that there are to-day thousands of Christians whose ancestors either thought themselves forced, or preferred, to have the Sacraments ministered by persons not ordained by bishops, and who now are inclined to set up various defences of the method.

Of those defences I do not propose to say much. When it is urged that all Christians are priests, and therefore any of them may celebrate the Holy Communion, it does not seem a very cogent argument if those who put it forward at the same time deny that that Sacrament is in any sense a sacrifice. When it is urged that there is no such thing as a difference between clergy and laity in the Church, one may answer briefly that the beginning

of the recognition of that difference is so ancient that the denial of it cannot be maintained. And again it may be argued, as above, that a body without differentiation of function among the members is not a body at all.

Concerning the methods of ordination or recognition mostly in use among the Free Churches, it has to be said that they are concomitant with, and, we believe, cause, a quite unexampled tendency to divisions. It must also be observed that except among Lutherans and Presbyterians the use and appreciation of the Sacraments is so small, that one is forced to inquire what is the tree which has borne this fruit.

If now we ask the question What are we to say about the Sacraments of the non-episcopal bodies? we find no great help in antiquity, so far as I know, except in the arguments which arose out of the controversy on the Baptism of heretics. The great consideration which moved Stephen and Augustine was the same as that with which this study begins. The one agent of importance in a Sacrament is God. In comparison with this, to anyone contemplating Sacraments with open eyes, all other agencies fade away into the shadow of the picture. So Stephen said, 'The grace of Baptism is of Christ, not of the human baptiser.' This is a truism, but it is forgotten when we make the grace of a Sacrament depend more upon the human instrument than upon the will of God. Again we gain a valuable hint from what seems at first the curious theory that in heretical sacraments the grace is present, but not profitable to the recipients. Without further explanation, I would sketch out an answer on these lines.

There seems no object in continuing to talk of invalidity. God's will is constant. He wills to give men grace through the Sacraments. The first and governing expression of His will is the institution of two Sacraments by His Son. A Sacrament can only be really invalid if

God refuses to send forth His grace in it. It is hard to me to conceive any reason sufficient to cause such a refusal on God's part, except a deliberate intention on the Church's and recipient's part *not to obey His Son,* that is an intention *to do otherwise than as the Lord Jesus commanded.*

If persons set out to baptise because our Lord commanded and as He commanded, all kinds of disbelief, misbelief, undervaluing of and ignorance about what He meant by it, will not prevent God from setting His grace to flow; but it will prevent the would-be recipients from receiving the full benefit of His grace. If their faith is genuine and their desire for grace earnest, God will give them more than they desire or deserve. He will not be able to give them all that He would be able to give to more receptive persons, or to persons who are members of a more faithful congregation. It must be a terrible obstacle to the will of God to adopt persons as His sons and daughters in Baptism, when baptisers and witnesses and baptised are all taught to deny Baptismal Regeneration. But if they are really trying to do what Christ told them, the generosity of God will reward their ignorant obedience with as much as possible of that grace which they deny. Similarly when a whole congregation and its minister supposes itself to be baptising a person into the Church of England or into the Methodist Church, it interposes a terrible obstacle to the uniting grace of God which He intends to flow into every person whom as His adoptive child He wills to make a member of the one Body of His Son. We see the malign results of this obstacle every day. Most Christians have no hearty sense that they belong first and foremost to the Church Catholic, the true Body of Christ, or that loyalty to it must be above all other loyalties. There is very little that is universal in their religious outlook, very much that is particularistic. But if we accept the Baptism of all sorts of Christians, and

refuse to rebaptise them, it must be ultimately because we believe that their Baptism was the universal Baptism by which God gives His adoption and brings men into His Universal Church. And again the only basis for that belief is that God's will has prevailed in spite of all the follies, ignorances, denials, and misbeliefs of the men who were trying to co-operate with Him. He has let His grace go out in response to the little true obedience, faith, and aspiration which sought for it, and the grace is waiting for more favourable conditions in which to develop its working. One of those conditions is that of embracing the chance of joining a wider unity, and especially a unity which in idea is one with the Universal Church.

We have been too easy in our judgments about Baptism, because we have lost sight of the fact that lay Baptism is only an exception to a rule, and that the point of employing the regular ministry to baptise is that it represents at once God and the Universal Church. Though we may refuse to speak of the invalidity of the Baptisms in the sects and sections of Christians, we must see what serious impediments to the operation of baptismal grace are introduced by the very fact of the divisions of Christendom and the sectional ideas which they produce.

Turning now to the Eucharist, we will follow the same principles. Where there is an honest attempt to obey Jesus Christ, can we say that God will refuse to set His grace flowing? Again we must admit that we cannot say so. But we shall be met with this reply, 'Do not those refuse to obey Jesus Christ who refuse to obey His Church and to follow the arrangements it has made for the carrying out of His commands?' A general answer to this would take one a long way, but one can shorten and simplify the answer by specialising it for this particular case. As always, one can only say that to obey Christ means to obey the Church, if and when the Church truly represents Christ.

The Church only does this certainly when undivided and when practically unanimous. These conditions were fulfilled in the case in point for 1500 years, and even in the sixteenth century, it is sometimes argued, the resort to new forms of ministry was accidental rather than deliberate on the part of the Reformers, though they soon framed deliberate theories to justify it. Again, obedience to the Church could only become obligatory as obedience to Christ if the Church were really uttering a command on a matter of principle, not settling one way or other a matter of indifference. Still more germane to the present case is the condition that to have the same degree of obligation as the Master's command, the Church's command must follow necessarily and essentially from His. Now it is pretty clear that our Lord gave no explicit directions as to the minister of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. He committed it to the Apostles and they were to make that and many other arrangements about it. As a fact, they made the arrangements which developed into that theory about the necessity of an ordained minister and the manner of his ordination which we know. But it would be very hard to maintain that this is the only arrangement which the Apostles could have made for the ministry of this Sacrament. Though personally, I believe I can see the value and benefit of each principal element in it, as compared with any other known arrangement for ministry, this might be dismissed as a personal judgment. We should then be left with the argument that the Church did evolve this constitution and therefore it is the best. That also I believe. But I can see how, without perversity, a man might hold that any form of orderly ministry would do as well as the episcopal, and that as a matter of fact, real appreciation of this Sacrament has survived in the Reformed Bodies, just where Church order was strongest and ordinations most careful and orderly. Consequently I cannot say that God would take a serious and humble man's refusal to obey

the undivided Church's commands in regard to the minister of this Sacrament as a refusal to obey Christ in the matter of the Sacrament. Consequently I cannot dismiss all Eucharists celebrated by ministers, not episcopally ordained, as invalid, because not implying the will to obey the Lord and do what He commanded to be done.

This does not mean that I, holding that the Church has settled the matter of the minister of the Eucharist in the best way, am at liberty to receive the Eucharist from ministers who are outside the historic ministry. If I did, I should be perilously near disobeying the command of Christ, as it has reached me through His Church. I should have no right to expect that God would extend to me the grace of the Sacrament through the hands of a ministry which I know is not the best and most truly authorised, especially when I can have it under better conditions.

To return to the non-episcopal ministry celebrating the Lord's Supper in the Free Churches. If the argument stated above is sound, we are obliged to admit that if there is an honest intention to do what the Lord commanded, God will not fail to do what He can for those who are honestly trying to obey. Even in the extreme case of those who say and think the Supper is a mere commemoration, God will do something for them, though their position is very near to rejection of our Lord's plain words. But, if they simply will not receive Him through and in the Sacrament, that refusal must prevent the grace which is present from being profitable to them in the way which our Lord intended. It is not then a question of one person's or one minister's faulty intention. It is that the whole congregation gathered together and the whole body of Christians to which it belongs have been deceived by Satan into refusing to have what the Lord offers and what the Great Church always seeks.

It cannot come within the compass of this paper to go through every aspect of the doctrine of the Eucharist. I

have taken one point in the action of God in that Sacrament. I will now take one point in the action of the Church.

Nothing can be more certain than that our Lord meant this Sacrament to be a Sacrament of the covenant between God and man in His blood.[1] It was instituted to teach men to regard His death as the sacrifice which made that covenant. It was instituted to enable the generations of those who should believe to take their place beside the one perfect and complete sacrifice, as offering it on their own behalf and on the behalf of all the other sons of the covenant, and as offering it with and in Him, in Whose blood they are consecrated, and through Whose eternal Spirit they can and must offer themselves, as He offered Himself, to God. The covenant between God and man is in the Blood of Jesus, that is, in the life surrendered by self-sacrifice to be lived in God and in others. But if we should try to offer ourselves apart from Christ we should be offering to God the blemished, the halt, and the blind. He is the only sacrifice without spot or blemish that we can offer. And therefore we do offer Him in His one unrepeatable sacrifice of the covenant; and then we feed on the Body, and because it is the *new* covenant of life, also on the Blood of the All-holy Victim, and receive from Him the power to join ourselves, to sink ourselves, in His self-sacrifice. According to the mind of the Great Church, as it is seen in all the ancient liturgies, we creatures of time take our stand day by day as offerers of the one eternally sufficient sacrifice. We are enabled to do this by our baptism and our past communions, and this offering of the sacrifice enables us to receive each communion with the intention of Him who instituted this Sacrament.

It is again a terrible obstacle to the profitableness of

[1] This truth is most unfortunately concealed by the translation, '*This is My blood of the new testament.*' The Lord actually said, '*My blood of the new covenant.*'

the grace of the Sacrament of the new covenant, if the whole of this vision of the offering Church is blotted out of our minds and hearts. And though this is nothing but the expression in act and in time of the very centre and core of the Gospel, it is not only forgotten but fought against in most of the Evangelical Free Churches and in portions of our own Church. I repeat that I do not say that the Sacrament is invalid where the Church's true part in it is thus forgotten or denied, but I do, and must, say, that where it is so forgotten and denied by whole congregations and denominations, the grace of the Sacrament of the covenant can get very little of its reconciling work done through the Sacrament.

Here the priesthood of the laity comes in. S. Thomas was wrong, surely, in confining it to the 'spiritual sacrifices' of a 'contrite spirit' or of 'praise and thanksgiving.' At the Eucharist, as, I believe, the Eastern Church insists with emphasis, the whole Church offers the sacrifice; the priest is only its mouthpiece and leader. The idea is not absent from the words of the Western Mass. In order to understand this idea, all that we have to do is to apply some words of Clement of Rome (which he wrote about the offerings of the Old Testament with the intention of their being so applied analogically).

> The offerings and ministrations He (God) commanded to be performed with care and not to be done rashly or in disorder. . . . Unto the high priest his proper services have been assigned, and to the priests their proper office is appointed, and upon the levites their proper ministrations are laid; the layman is bound by the layman's ordinances.[1]

It is very obvious that the grace of uniting love which ought to be brought to us by the Sacrament of the one bread and the one cup, is very much impeded when we, who receive it, are in all our work separated from and in

[1] Ad Cor. 40.

competition with others who are called by the name of Christ, and not only in competition, but rivalry, sometimes bitter rivalry, and even it may be enmity. In this regard our divisions not only impede the grace of this Sacrament, but make a mock of it.

Recapitulation.—The conclusion of this study would seem to be that the word 'invalidity' is unsuitable to the subject-matter to which it is often applied. A Sacrament can only be invalid if God refuses to send out His grace through it. I have urged that it is very unlikely that He would refuse to send out His grace unless all the other agents concerned in the Sacrament, the Church, the ministers, and the recipients, were not trying to obey Him, that is to say, in Baptism and the Eucharist not trying to obey His Son and to do what He commanded. But over against this rejection of the common conception of invalidity, I would urge that we must admit that there are many conditions required for the free and perfect operation of grace through a Sacrament, and that failure of any of those conditions impedes the operation of the grace. The failure of some of the conditions is so serious, that, till the failure is removed, the grace can scarcely operate, if at all. The condition of schism, since it almost always prevents schismatics from having the mind of the Great Church, *i.e.* from meaning what the Spirit in the Church Universal means, always impedes the operation of the grace of Sacraments, and we can see why the ancient Fathers held that heresy and schism combined inhibited altogether the operation of the grace of the Sacraments, for in those days they nearly always involved the denial or the lack of something vitally connected with the Sacraments. In modern days, when there are vast masses of Christians who have inherited separation and often heresy without conscious choice, without knowing why they are separated or to what they might be re-united, a less despondent view might be

taken. But we must still say that separation in itself impedes the operation of the grace of Sacraments, which the Universal Father wills to give through them to the Universal Church.

What then, it may be asked, becomes of the famous passage of Ignatius from which this study started? If one refers to the original passage in the letter to the Smyrnaeans, it begins with the words, 'Shun divisions as the beginning of evils,' and ends with the words, 'It is not lawful, apart from the bishop, either to baptise or to make an *agape*, but, whatever he approves, that is well-pleasing to God, in order that everything which ye do may be safe and sure' (ἀσφαλὲς καὶ βέβαιον). I submit that the whole point here is the need of unity among the true believers, and the consequent need of knowing where to find them. The bishops are the bond of this unity, and so long as they are responsible for all baptisms, simple people may be sure who are Christians, and so long as they are responsible for all Eucharists, simple people may be sure of entering through them into fellowship with the true Body of Christ. He is not thinking of avoiding the communion of heretics, for those whom he had in mind, as he has just said (Chap. VI), did not communicate. But he is thinking of unity within the Church, and very likely among closely neighbouring Churches. This is the point of emphasis in Ignatius throughout, and this is precisely the strongest point that can be made against substituting many ministries of different origins for one ministry of the same origin. This substitution makes insecure the bonds of unity which the Sacraments were intended to form: it makes the Church seem to have many Baptisms and many Eucharists. For a further discussion of Ignatius' meaning, see additional note on p. 156.

CHAPTER IX

THE RECOGNITION OF MINISTRIES

A GREAT deal which bears on this subject has been said in the study upon the 'Validity' of Sacraments.

In this chapter I will not do more than indicate the lines of approach to the subject.

Five things need to be determined:

(1) What different kinds of ministry have been recognised by the Historic Church?

(2) What do the ministries of the modern Free Churches claim to be?

(3) What functions do those ministries actually perform?

(4) Can the ministries of the Free Churches, in virtue of what they are, be recognised as belonging to certain historic types?

(5) So far as they cannot, what should be said about them?

1. *Types of Ministry in the Historic Church.*—The historic Church recognised very early the distinction between the *kleros* and the *laos*. In the period of the composition of the books of the New Testament, this distinction was not yet explicit, but ministries existed in many forms, partly germinal, partly experimental, partly temporary. The evidence of the New Testament has been discussed in the study on 'The Ministry in the Primitive Church.' Here it will be sufficient to recall that differenti-

ation of function appears from the first under the guidance of the Apostles. As the distribution of functions became more fixed, the three great Orders of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons gained a recognised position of permanence. Below them come other Orders of men and women, not always the same in number or name, conceived as their assistants, but, like them, owing what authority they had to ordination. Over against these ordained persons, there were the prophets, well-known and respected at first, but gradually losing their distinct position because either the Church laid hands on them and by ordination merged them in the great Orders, or lost them to heresy. No one ever thought of ordaining a prophet to be a prophet. The Church recognised from his utterances, that he had been given the prophetic inspiration by the Holy Spirit. There were also teachers, some of them famous, who were not ordained; Origen was head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria as a layman. Later on we must notice the preachers among the monastic orders. Many of the Friars were laymen and preachers. It is right to bear in mind that (1) not all the ordained were authorised to minister the Sacraments, and (2) not all those who actually ministered the word were ordained, and (3) in many ages not all the presbyters were licensed to preach. The conception of a minister who combines all spiritual functions as his normal business is not really characteristic of the historic Church.

There was a very close connexion between ordination and Sacraments. That connexion deserves a more minute study than can be given to it here. Perhaps it may suffice to suggest that the ministry of the Sacraments was very closely connected, both in fact and idea, with the unity of the Church. It is certain that this connexion was perceived in antiquity, and it was part of the reason why the Sacraments were confined by definite rule to the ordained ministry. It is certain also that nothing facilitates divisions

so much as the theory that any congregation can make to itself a regular ministry.

2. *What the Free Churches say of their Ministries.*—The claim made by 'The Free Churches' on behalf of their ministry had better be stated in the words of members of them.

But Dr. R. J. Campbell may first be quoted. His judgment is very clear and simple :

> Would anyone dare to deny the presence of the Holy Ghost in the work of the Nonconformist ministry? It is this token of God's blessing upon the labours of men not episcopally ordained that I had specially in mind in saying in the previous chapter that I regard myself as no more and no less truly a minister of Christ to-day than I was when I preached in the City Temple. I have received a new authority to serve the altar, but in the prophetic sense my earlier ministry was as valid as the one I am exercising now : in fact it is the same. God is not confined to any channel of grace. In all ages he has chosen His own instruments to declare His word and inspired them for the purpose : the prophet cannot be restrained from speaking any more than he can be endowed to speak his message of life and power by any ecclesiastical authority whatsoever. It is a direct gift of God, and needs no other sign of its authenticity than the sign of the prophet Jonah—its effect in the hearts of men.
>
> But this consideration gives rise to a very important further point. Nonconformists have never claimed any other kind of orders for their ministers than this. It is the charismatic gift, and that alone, that they value in the exercise of a ministry, the utterance of the prophetic word. This is all they have historically insisted upon in this connection—the validity of the ministry of the Word. Where, as I think, they make a mistake is in regarding this as the only kind of valid ministry and refusing to recognise any other.[1]

[1] *A Spiritual Pilgrimage*, p. 313.

This statement must be compared with others.

Dr. A. Garvie,[1] after telling us that while as a revolt against certain views of ordination, regarded as superstitious,

some Nonconformists have been opposed to and have refused ordination, it is now the universal custom in the Nonconformist Churches to ordain ministers, if here and there some irregularity still survives in the arrangements for ordination.

He speaks of the general desire to give

recognition to the principle of the unity of the Church and the continuity of its ministry in the method of ordination. Any theory about it which would go beyond what we have seen to be the primitive conception of it, *a corporate recognition of the grace-gift*, investing with the authority of the Church the exercise of that gift within the Christian community, would not, however, be accepted generally.

Dr. Vernon Bartlet in the same book [2] makes it clear that there is in his theory of ordination not only a recognition of a grace-gift, but a commission giving jurisdiction over the members of the body in which the ordination takes place.

The essence of ordination as maintained in this essay is formal conferment of right to act in the name of the Church, whether as particular or as universal. It is only as symbol of fresh jurisdiction, in this case over a fresh body of Church members, that existing non-episcopal ministers could accept further ordination than that which they already possess; and the correlative of this would be a like extension of jurisdiction, by a similar act, in the case of Anglican bishops as representing their communion.

And again [3]

It may be taken as widely agreed among Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians, in the light at once of New Testament and really primitive evidence and of the general teaching

[1] *Towards Reunion*, p. 158. [2] Pp. 230–1. [3] P. 232.

of their respective communions since the Reformation, that the right to exercise corporate authority is *the essence* of what is conferred by the human acts of ecclesiastical appointment and ordination to the Christian ministry: in other words, it is valid jurisdiction for certain Church functions, within the sphere covered by the corporate authority of the ecclesiastical body represented by those ordaining.

And again [1]

That commission, like all existing ecclesiastical commissions, would be both human and divine. The exact nature of the Divine grace operative in, and through, the duly ordained, by virtue of their ordination, should be left an open question for individual faith. But inasmuch as it is agreed that the grace qualifying a Christian man for special ministry in the Church, resting as it does on vocation, is of God; also that the human agents in the selection and ordination of those thus called are indwelt by God's own Spirit; *the commissioning act is not a mere human one in the ordinary sense, in which it is contrasted with the divine, but is divine-human.* In fact, it is 'churchly' in the true Christian sense of the word. As such, it carries with it the divinest kind of authority which can be conferred by any formal act among men, that of the Body of Christ visible on earth, however limited in practice the degree and range of its actual exercise may be by local and temporary conditions.

Next we may quote two very clear passages from Dr. P. T. Forsyth.[2]

The minister is much more than a leading brother as the Church itself is more than a fraternity. He is neither the mouthpiece of the Church, nor its chairman, nor its secretary. He is not the servant, not the employee, of the Church. He is an apostle to it, the mouthpiece of Christ's gospel to it, the servant of the Word and not of the Church: he serves the Church only for that sake. The ministry is a prophetic and sacramental office; it is not a secretarial, it

[1] *Towards Reunion*, p. 233.
[2] *The Church and the Sacraments*, p. 123.

is not merely presidential. It is sacramental and not merely functional. It is the outward and visible agent of the inward gospel grace.

Again, at p. 127 :

The Church has therefore elective power in respect of the ministry, but not creative. It did not institute the function of preaching ; the irrepressible nature of the Word did that. Nor could it equip a man with the message ; the Spirit did that. But it could and must discriminate between the claimants to prophetic respect and scope. It could not give divine authority, but only social opportunity. That is ordination, which no single congregation has power to give, but only the greater Church. The Church did not create the ministry, but only filled its ranks. It could license individuals to represent it, but not equip them. It could own the Spirit, but not command it nor bestow. The case was one of recognition of the Spirit, and not investiture with it.

We may add yet another quotation from Dr. Forsyth,[1] for it shows the historical justification alleged for the Free Church theory of ministry. (The historical part of the argument follows Harnack without acknowledgment, implying that this is a commonly accepted view in the circle of the writer) :

Christ chose the Apostles directly, the ministers He chose and chooses through the Church. The Church does not always choose right ; but then Judas was in the twelve. The Apostolate was not perpetuated, and certainly not self-perpetuated ; but it was replaced by another instrument for the same purpose at the motion of the same Spirit. It was replaced not by a prolongation but by a mandatory to administer its trust by the ministry of the Word. For that Word the Apostles had authority by a unique call direct from Christ ; the ministry had function by a call truly from Christ, but mediated through the Church and

[1] *The Church and the Sacraments,* p. 130.

repeated generation after generation—the function of being the living sacraments of a gospel the Apostles gave. What the ministry had was a functional continuity in preaching the Word revealed to the Apostles, administering its sacraments, and applying its principles in a Christian ethic. The Apostolic succession is the Evangelical succession. Its continuity lies not in a due devolution but in a common inspiration, a common ministration of God's grace as mercy. This ministry took the place of the Apostolate in the second century. The Ignatian bishop is a congregational minister. The Church changed and corrected the form of the ministry then, as it did at the Reformation, as it has always power to do. The Apostles had a commission from God by Christ's endowment. They descended on the Church, they did not rise from it. But the ministry had also a mandate from men, from a Church who, by spiritual discernment, recognised in certain of their number Christ's gift of gospelling in some form. It did arise from the Church—though the trust it ministered, the gospel that made it, did not. The Apostolate was not instituted by the Churches, the ministry was. But the trust was in common, and the function was alike. It was to convey (not merely to announce but sacramentally to convey) the grace of God to men.

These extracts will suffice as representing individual leaders and their judgment of the matter. A still more important judgment is that given in the 'Report of the Representatives appointed by the Evangelical Free Churches of England to consider the closer co-operation of the Free Churches.' This represents the work of three Conferences of Representatives held in 1916 and 1917. The Representatives represented Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, all kinds of Methodists, Moravians and Disciples of Christ. The 'Declaratory Statement of Common Faith and Practice' contains the following paragraphs on the Sacraments and the Ministry (p. 9):

The Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—are instituted by Christ, Who is Himself certainly and really

present in His ordinances (though not bodily in the elements thereof), and are signs and seals of His Gospel not to be separated therefrom. They confirm the promises and gifts of salvation, and, when rightly used by believers with faith and prayer, are, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, true means of grace.

The ministry is an office within the Church—not a sacerdotal order—instituted for the preaching of the Word, the ministration of the Sacraments and the care of souls. It is a vocation from God, upon which therefore no one is qualified to enter save through the call of the Holy Spirit in the heart; and this inward call is to be authenticated by the call of the Church, which is followed by ordination to the work of the ministry in the name of the Church. While thus maintaining the ministry as an office, we do not limit the ministries of the New Testament to those who are thus ordained, but affirm the priesthood of all believers and the obligation resting upon them to fulfil their vocation according to the gift bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit.

The Report of the Committee on the Ministry must also be quoted (pp. 20 and 21):

Having received statements from the representatives of the different denominations, as to the meaning they severally attach to 'ordination,' and the procedure connected with the same, the Conference is unanimously of opinion that there is no obstacle to the recognition by the Federating Churches of the ministry of all who are duly ordained or recognised as ministers of the Gospel by any of the Evangelical Free Churches.

This judgment is based on the fact that all these churches recognise the office of the ministry within the Church as divinely instituted; the necessity of an avowed call of the Holy Spirit to this office on the part of the candidates for it; and the duty of the Church to examine the reality of such call; and only regard as duly appointed ministers those who have received and accepted a call of the Church to this office, and have been 'recognised' or 'ordained' by representatives of that branch of the Church in which the ministry is to be exercised.

The terms of reference to the Committee were submitted as follows :

That the question of the training of the ministry in Theological Colleges, whilst very important, belongs to a later stage of procedure after the Federal Council is formed. But your committee recommends that the Committee on the Ministry be appointed to collect all the facts concerning the methods in which ministers are now recognised in each of the Federating Churches, and to report what, in their judgment, should be the conditions requiring to be fulfilled by ministers of any of the Federating Churches prior to their ministry being recognised by all the others.

It is abundantly clear that Dr. Campbell's statement that the ' validity of the ministry of the Word ' is ' all that the Nonconformists have historically insisted upon,' would not be accepted by the other authors quoted, and that at the present date the Free Churches claim to have a valid ministry of the Sacraments. On the other hand, it is equally clear that Dr. Forsyth is throughout protesting against some views still widely current in the Free Churches. Particularly the statement ' no single congregation, but only the greater Church, has power to give ordination ' is contrary to the traditional theory of Congregationalism, though the principle enunciated by Dr. Forsyth may be now making headway amongst Congregationalists in England.

Thus there are two views of ordination current among Free Churchmen. They start from the common ground that the candidate for the ministry must have an inward call, which is proved by testing to be real. This call needs to be recognised by the ' Church,' a term which is used ambiguously by them for the local Church, or the denomination, or the Universal Church as acting through the local Church or the denomination. But it does not matter how that recognition is effected, so long as it be done according to rule. This seems clearly to underlie

the Report of the Free Church Committee on the Ministry quoted above. But the strange thing is that this is held equally by those who hold that the ministry is sectional, and the recognition has merely the effect of allowing the man recognised to minister in the denomination which his recognisers represent, and by those who, like the Presbyterians, hold most strongly that the ministry is universal, and the man is made by ordination a minister in the Church of God.

In any case, the Free Church position is that 'the Church' has at any time a right to change its system of ministry. It must be borne in mind that neither did the majority of Christians at the Reformation think so, nor do the majority of Christians think so now. Nor did the majority of Christians at the Reformation abandon the ministry of the succession, nor have they since abandoned it.

I have endeavoured to show elsewhere that the theory of Harnack and others that there was a great break in principle between the ministry of the Apostles and that of the second century bishops would have been quite strange to the consciousness of the contemporaries. It is also perfectly clear that the system of the ministry from the second to the sixteenth centuries was not congregational, and no one of those days would have said that the Christian communities were the one source of ministerial authority. This latter point is, of course, accepted by any one who says that another great break was made in the sixteenth century. But though we may reject their historical theory, the Free Churches would appeal to 'fact.' They would urge that the fact is (as I think I have seen it expressed somewhere by Dr. Forsyth) that Jesus Christ has acknowledged the non-episcopal Churches quite as much as the episcopal.

3. *Functions actually performed by Free Church Ministers.*—I have not the requisite knowledge to answer in

a satisfactory way the question, What functions do the Free Church ministers actually perform? I believe it could not be answered in the same terms for all of them. The ministry of the Sacraments is really important among the Presbyterians and the Lutherans, and the Bishop of London implies that it is so among the Wesleyans. Certainly among some other communities it is very unimportant indeed. On the Mission Field the Ministers settle the terms of membership of the Church; they deprive persons of membership as we excommunicate them. This is a function which in the Historic Church goes with the ministry of the Sacraments. Reunion must take account of facts as well as of theories. One of the difficulties of the present stage is that there is not sufficient knowledge on our part of the facts. But if reunion be attempted with only some of the greater bodies, it would be fairly easy to discover the facts. The facts are important, not only as testing the claims, but perhaps even more as indicating how far a united corporate life would be congenial or possible to the rank and file of the communities.

4. *Can the Ministries of the Free Churches, in virtue of what they are, be recognised as belonging to certain historic types?*—(*a*) *Are they Prophets and Teachers?*—The answer to this fourth question which comes most readily to mind is, that the ministries of the Free Churches represent a revival of the ancient Christian prophets and of the teachers who worked with them. Dr. R. J. Campbell (in the extract quoted above) seems to take that view.

The ancient Church tested the prophets, and if they stood the test, accepted them. They did not ordain them by laying-on of hands. Concerning the test, two passages may be quoted. First, S. John says: 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God:

every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh: and now it is in the world already.'[1] The line taken here against incipient Gnosticism has been taken, and must be taken, against other forms of error concerning our Lord's Person. So in the present day a prophet who adopted a revived Arianism or Nestorianism, or in fact any form of Unitarianism, should, in accordance with S. John's instructions, be rejected as a false prophet. The second passage which may be quoted is from Hermas:

> By his life test the man that hath the Divine Spirit. In the first place, he that hath the Divine Spirit, which is from above, is gentle and tranquil and humble-minded, and abstaineth from all wickedness and vain desire of this present world, and holdeth himself inferior to all men, and giveth no answer to any man when enquired of, nor speaketh in solitude (for neither doth the Holy Spirit speak when a man wisheth him to speak); but the man speaketh then when God wisheth him to speak.[2]

The Great Church would add now, after all these centuries, that there must be in the true prophet the note of universality; he must be speaking what the Spirit has spoken to the Churches, or in accordance with it.

Thus the principle of recognition after testing is appropriate to the prophetic ministry, and it follows an historic precedent of the most ancient Church—though it must be admitted that this separate ministry of prophets probably ceased to exist before the end of the second century.

It could not be pretended that all Free Church Ministers are prophets. Some are obviously no more than simple teachers, who teach as scribes instructed to the kingdom of heaven, like the majority of teachers in any Church

[1] 1 John iv. 1–3. [2] Herm., *Mand.* xi, 7–8.

and in any age. One has to go back to very primitive times for teachers who were merely recognised as teachers because they taught and were proved to teach well. It is most likely that 'teachers' in the list in 1 Cor. xii. 28 belonged to the missionary staff and may therefore have been of this type. The teachers in the list in Eph. iv. 11 are coupled (by a single article) with the pastors, and they are the elders of the local ministry. There are, of course, instances in later times of lay teachers and lay preachers, as has been mentioned above. It might be pleaded that these sufficed to give an historical background to a ministry of teaching, resting on recognition, not on commission. But it could not be gainsaid that the main stream of Church practice has taken the line of giving a commission to teachers to teach in the Church's name and in that of her Head. This has proved a support to the teachers and a security to the Church.

However, the real objection to dealing thus with the Free Church ministries as ministries of prophets and teachers is that Free Churchmen as a whole will not accept the position that their ministries are only ministries of the Word, and not general ministries, qualified to do everything that a minister has ever done, and particularly to administer the Sacraments. In fact, one of the most general features of their thinking and writing is that they continually insist that all ministers are the same. They dislike the word priest, and will not use it except as a description of every Christian as such. They do not claim that their ministers are priests or bishops; they will not admit that our ministers are more than ministers, because in their mind there is only one undifferentiated order of ministry in the Church, which can do everything that a Christian minister ought to do.

The result of this view, so far as our present inquiry is concerned, is this, that the Free Churchmen themselves would undoubtedly claim that their ministers are ministers

of the Word and Sacraments. In this they are true to type. The fathers of the Reformation held that a true Church must possess both the preaching of the word and the administration of the Sacraments ; and the ministries set up by them were to provide both these requisites.

(*b*) *Are the Ministers of the Free Churches Ministers of the Word and Sacraments of any historical type?*—If the argument of the study on ' the ministry in the Primitive Church ' be correct, there is no precedent in the early history, except the certainly eccentric semi-Jewish community portrayed in the Didache, for any ministry appointed and constituted as the Free Church ministries are. And this is practically admitted when the Free Church writers use such language as ' the Church changed and corrected the form of the ministry then ' (i.e., in the end of the Apostolic age) ' as it did at the Reformation, as it has always power to do.' [1] This is their contention. The Reformers broke with the historic ministry. In Germany some bishops followed the Reformation, but no attempt was made to keep up the succession in ordination. The question before us is whether their theory of ministry can be accepted as belonging to any historical type. It was—at the Reformation—confessedly new. What was it intended to be like ?

Luther, Calvin, and the Scottish Reformers—with differences of detail—held that the Church must lay down rules for the testing and ordination of ministers, and that the ordination must, and could only, be carried out rightly under the authority of ' the Church '—by which of course they meant their Church. They conceived that the Reformation would spread over all Christendom, and its rules and customs would become universal. This then was one Reformation conception. The form and method of ordination did not matter and was open to variation from time to time, but it must be under the authority of

[1] Dr. Forsyth, *The Church and the Sacraments*, quoted above.

the Church. It was a matter which belonged to, and concerned, the Church as a whole, and the supreme authority of the Church must regulate it. Unless this happened, chaos must result. This is roughly still the view of Scottish Presbyterianism.

There arose another conception of the ministry, namely, that any body of Christians might gather together at will and form themselves into a Church, and create for themselves a ministry without reference to any higher authority. This was the theory of Independency, and it survived long in Congregationalism. This theory and this practice cause chaos, because they open the way to infinite subdivision.

Unless the Presbyters, whom the communities described in the Didache 'chose,' were to be ordained by the wandering Apostles during some of their two days' visits, one can scarcely deny that those communities were Independents. But this early Independency, if it ever existed, died completely out of the historic Church. What justification was there for reviving it? It is said that evolution never goes back, and that the type which has failed and died out is not renewed. But perhaps the application of evolutionary doctrine to spiritual history is illegitimate.

The justification alleged might be two-fold. First, at the time of the Reformation, it might be said, that the historic ministry was so barren of true fruits of the Spirit, that a new ministry had to be created. 'Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.'[1] That, it might be urged, was what happened at the Reformation. Men boasted themselves in their ministry of the succession: and God raised up from nothing a ministry which held a spiritual succession. The other justification would be *ex post facto*: that the creation of this new ministry had justified

[1] Matt. iii. 9.

itself by its effects, and so had become one of the historic ministries.

To the second argument we may fairly answer that these ministries have brought forth the fruit of division to an unparalleled degree. It is largely because men are by such arrangements for the ministry deceived into thinking that they can at will create a completely equipped little Church of their own, that so many new bodies of Christians have been formed in the last three centuries.

This point is urged primarily as against the Independents' view of ministry. But can the Presbyterians' view wholly escape from the same criticism? They hold that ordination should be by, and under, the supreme authority of the Church. But did they ever have such an authority? They hold that their ministry is a universal ministry for the Church of God. But, if so, ought it not to be regulated by the supreme authority of the universal Church? Even if we grant that the Church could change the form of the ministry, does not that mean that those who wish it changed must first persuade the whole Church to change the form of the ministry? Only on the theory that the Reformers were the whole Church can it be held that '*the Church* changed and corrected the form of the Ministry at the Reformation.' The Reformers' acts in setting up new ministries were in fact acts of independency, though they intended to restrain the independency of any smaller units than their National Churches. On them must fall part of the blame for the wild subdivisions of Protestant Christianity which took place afterwards. And, as things have turned out, the objections urged above against the ministries of Independency lie also against Presbyterian ministries. Since the Reformation failed to extend over the whole Church, the only difference between the claims of Presbyterians and Independents about ministry is that Presbyterians claim that any large section of Christians may regulate and create a ministry

as they like, and Independents or Congregationalists that any small section may do so.

It is gladly recognised that Lutherans and Scottish Presbyterians have retained strong sacramental doctrine, and maintained reverent use of the Sacraments. But it must be sorrowfully admitted that many of the other Protestant sects, especially those which derive from Independency, have depreciated the value and use of the Sacraments and have constantly denied much of the truth about them. It is hardly to be gainsaid that there are many ministries in the Free Churches to-day, whose teaching and practice about the Sacraments are such as to lend no support to their claim to be rightful ministers of the Sacraments.

In respect to the first justification of the creation of a new ministry at the Reformation, one may say two things. First, that, even if the nett result of the Reformation is regarded as a great gain to Christianity, this cannot justify all its incidents. Supposing an incident of the Reformation were ever so necessary at the time, yet, if it can be shown to have injurious consequences, it must be given up as soon as possible. It is pretty clear that the liberty, claimed and exercised, to create ministries at will and apart from the main body of the Church and in contravention of its traditional rules about ministry, had the most injurious effects in promoting division. If then a time comes—as we hope it is coming or has come—when the requisite spiritual fruits of ministry can be obtained together with an adherence to the historic ministry of the Church, then the liberty of making new ministries should be given up. Again, if we may attempt to look at the matter from God's side, it cannot be said that, because God showed Himself willing at one period to raise up children to Abraham from stones, He will necessarily always wish to go on with the process. Suppose that because of the defects of the ministry of the succession

at one period, He gave grace through a new ministry: still that does not prove that He would not have preferred (but for the perversity of man) to give the grace which the world needed through the ministry of the succession, nor that He would not prefer to do so now, when we hope that He may judge us to be a little less perverse, a little more fit for His use.

So far then as the interpretation of their ministry current among Free Churchmen goes, it is a new type of ministry which can claim no authority in the history of fifteen centuries, which never has been assented to by the whole Church, which has led to and facilitated endless division, and which, if it was justifiable as a temporary expedient, ought to be abandoned as soon as that justification has passed away.

5. *So far as the ministries of the Free Churches cannot be recognised as belonging to certain historical types, what should be said about them?*—Some readers may be prompt to reply that what ought to have been said long ago is that history is not everything.

> John P. Robinson, he
> Says, 'they didn't know everything down in Judee.'

One has often conversed with people who have recalled to one's mind that delightful jingle. They are really rather suspicious of anything which can lay claim to antiquity. To them nothing is likely to be good unless it was invented in this century, or at least in the last. But the Great Church belief is that the Church is continuous down the ages as well as across the climes, and, more than that, the Church is an organism which has grown and ever grows, and, if any one of our little lives wishes to abide within the great life of that immortal organism, it must abide by the laws of the greater life. That is the conception which demands of us the appeal to history.

We cannot start afresh on an investigation of all the

possible ways in which a ministry might be constituted, and all the possible relations in which the people might stand to it. Should we regard a God-inspired man as a sort of genius whom a congregation hires for a while to do the preaching for it, as a man hires an artist to paint his wife's portrait, or an architect to build his house? Or should a minister be like the master of a City Company chosen for a time to direct its affairs by and out of the body of freemen? Or should a bishop be like the Master of a College, chosen by the other Fellows (or Professors, as our American friends would say) to guide them as *primus inter pares*, and to rule the students as their head? Or should a bishop or a pastor be like the executive officer of a municipality chosen and paid to do the bidding of his employers so long as they are satisfied with him? Others may amuse themselves with such speculations. For us they would be waste of time. We reply to one and all, 'It is not so. Perhaps the Body of Christ might have grown so, but it did not. It is not like any other human society. It grew by an impulse from above, continually given and continually responded to. By the will of the Founder there was always that interchange, that action and reaction. Christ and the disciples; the Apostles and the brethren; the Apostles with the elders and the brethren; the clergy and the laity—in all these pairs there appears and reappears the meeting of divine impulses, the divine impulse to call and to lead, and the divine impulse to answer and to follow. The clergy are indispensable to the Church, and commission is indispensable to the clergy.'

May I suggest in passing that the theory that the congregation is the ultimate source of the minister's authority, and that the authority of the ministry is devolved on it by 'the Saints' must, if logically followed out, bring one to a denial of the distinction between *kleros* and *laos* altogether? If this theory is true, the whole

laos is *kleros*, and only devolves upon one or more of its members some of the duties which it is inconvenient that all should exercise concurrently. But of that theory there is, as I have tried to show above,[1] no sign or suggestion in Scripture. The whole action of our Lord towards His Apostles, and the whole interpretation of His intentions which their actions reveal, make in the opposite direction.

There are some things which the Free Churches have done pre-eminently well. Some, or possibly all, of these things were being insufficiently done anywhere in Christendom in the age of the Reformation. Can we show, even in outline, how, if the Great Church wakes, and moves freely every limb, and exercises every function with which she has been endowed, these special excellencies of the Free Churches would find a place in the great life of the whole?

The commissioned ministry will remain as representing the steady and continual dealing of Christ with His Church in normal ways and daily necessities. The practice of episcopal ordination will remain, and, I believe, also the theory of it, which sees in it a symbolic representation that the commission to the ministry comes from the divine Head of the Church, and not from the will of the people. But the people will recover their due place in selection and appointment as contrasted with ordination. And they will play their part in this not altogether in the manner of men conducting a political election, but rather in that of men on the look-out for a leading of the Spirit and intent on perceiving and registering that leading. Enough has been said already about the election of a bishop. In outline the selection should be made by his future diocese through some reasonably representative body; and it should then have the approval of the con-provincial bishops. After this selection and this approval, bishops

[1] See p. 23 and Chap. VI.

should consecrate. The people should have much more part than nowadays in the selection of priests. Those who know them best, the congregation where they have lived, or worked, should, if possible, positively recommend them, instead of negatively declaring, as now, that they are unobjectionable people. The priests of the diocese, either as a body or by representation, should also approve. After this, the bishop should, if he thinks well, ordain. Again, the congregation which the priest is to serve, when later he has charge of a parish, should have a real part in calling him to minister to them. The deacons should also be elected by some method of popular election, and be approved and ordained by the bishop, and should have their older functions concerning the care of the business side of the Church's charitable efforts made once more the main part of their duties.

It does not appear to me impossible or unreasonable that the Church should again recognise the occasional, and, if one may use the word, irregular and unpredictable, action of the Spirit in raising up men to refresh or reprove the Church by prophecy. Let the Church test them, never ordain them by laying on of hands, but recognise them as a part of the *kleros* which has solely a ministry of the Word. If it is advisable that a prophet become also a minister of the Sacraments and a ruler of the Church, let him be ordained and consecrated. It would not be reasonable to say that the ministry of prophecy was a line of evolution which failed and disappeared. It cannot be said to have been evolved. Prophets cannot be represented as an adaptation of the Church to its environment. They were correctives of the environment thrown into it by the Spirit when He willed.

Does not such a programme go far to take up all the essential points which the Free Churches have made good about ministry? On the one hand, the due part of the people in selecting ministers is provided for: on the

other hand, the fact is admitted and acted on that there are some ministers of the Word to whom God gives a call to prophesy, which for its complete fulfilment needs nothing but recognition by the Church.

This programme, however, distinguishes between kinds of ministry, whereas the Free Churches tend to confuse all kinds together. Such distinctions should be followed further. There are many duties which the laity ought to do without being ordained to the greater ministries of the Church. In antiquity, as in some places at the present day, the Church recognised by what were called *minor orders* the sacredness of all sorts of work done for it, and marked out for the workers the place which their work gave them in the body. This is probably one of the directions in which the Great Church will move when she wakes. She will not insist so rigidly on three Orders, but will inspire and dedicate a larger number of Orders of Service. The Free Churches have shown illuminating examples of the employment of laymen and women on different parts of the work of the Church. It is wholly in accordance with the mind of the Great Church that such opportunities should be afforded by which the Spirit's impulses in the laity may find scope and expression. We seem also to be moving towards giving them a greater and a very much more regular share in the Councils of the Church than ever they had in antiquity. Undoubtedly a great part of the strength of Presbyterianism lies in a similar development of the responsibilities of the laity.

Is the Ministry a Sacerdotal order?—Is any such outline of the conceptions of ministry, which might prevail when the Great Church wakes, likely to satisfy the present Free Churchmen? There is a phrase in the Report of the Representatives of Evangelical Free Churches of England which seems to imply that they regard themselves as fundamentally opposed to a part of the historic position of the Church. 'The Ministry,' they say, 'is an office

within the Church, not a Sacerdotal Order.' I cannot but believe that this solemn denial arises from some deep-rooted misunderstanding. What is the matter with the word *Order*? The Great Church has always held that the ministry is an Order or several Orders. The *kleros* is a body of persons with a lifelong commission which differentiates them from the *laos*. It is very hard to see why the Evangelical Free Churches should fight against this.

But is it *sacerdotal*? The Order of Priests or Presbyters is sacerdotal in the sense that it specialises on doing the work of priesthood. It is there to make sure that the priesthood of the Body of Christ is really exercised. But it acts for and with the multitude of believers, not instead of them; not in order that they may not act, but in order that they may exercise their priesthood better. Priests offer sacrifices. The ministerial priesthood is in charge of the offerings of sacrifices which the whole Church does. Without the Church, it cannot offer them. Without its ministerial priests, the Church would offer them badly. Priests intercede. The Church as a whole intercedes for the world and for itself: but its ministerial priests lead and direct it in intercession. Priests know and teach the law. The Church has the whole law of Christ, the law of liberty, committed to it, but through its ministerial priests it gets the work of knowing and teaching it done well. In no case is this conception of the co-operation of *kleros* and *laos* plainer than in the bishop's function of excommunication and reconciliation. If he does not excommunicate *with* the congregation, the excommunication fails of effect. If he does not reconcile *with* the congregation, the penitent misses the precious sense of being received back into a home of loving faces and loving words. Private penance and private reconciliation are acts of the Church which the Church keeps private because

the sins are private, and, by being made public, would only give an advantage to Satan.

Thus there is a real sacerdotal character in the priesthood, which need not be noxious or be considered alarming. We have all been made priests to God by Jesus Christ, but being members of a body, we exercise our priesthood, not indiscriminately, but by the help of a specialised organ. The ministerial priesthood exists, not that the *laos* should be less priestly, but that it should be more effectively priestly.

Ordination and recognition.—It will have been observed in the extracts given from Free Church writers in the second section of the present study, that, though many Free Churchmen now speak of ordination, they all explain it to mean recognition. Some bodies appear to have retained that term and not to use the word ordination. It is not a matter of words. Over and over again it is explained that in their ordination the Free Churches (*a*) *recognise* a gift of God to a man which he knows by an inward call that he has received, and (*b*) give him license or jurisdiction that he may exercise it within the Church and as a representative of the Church. To the Great Church ordination has meant much more than this. These aspects have not been absent from its idea of ordination, but they have been subordinate in it. The characteristic meaning attributed to ordination has been (*a*) that God at the prayer of the Church gives a gift of the Holy Spirit—an empowering grace, which the man most likely did not possess before—to enable him to fulfil the commission to a certain ministry; (*b*) that at the same time Christ through the bishop gives a commission to the man to perform a certain definite ministry in the Church; and (*c*) that the body of ministers who are already possessed of that commission, through their representatives pass on to the man ordained a share of their God-given authority. Ordination incidentally gives a man 'social opportunity' in Dr. Forsyth's sense, i.e. opportunity to

work within the Society. But it gives this as a consequence of the commission to work.

It appears pretty clear that the Free Church writers in the book 'Towards Reunion,' on the one hand intend to deny that any of these three parts of ordination, as we conceive of it, has any place in their ordination, and on the other hand, I am afraid, they intend to deny that any such things ever happened or could happen in ordination. In consequence, they do not claim to have been ordained in the sense in which I believe myself to have been ordained. Now they do not seem to perceive that in asking me to admit that they are ministers exactly as much as, and in the same sense as, any Catholic Bishop or Priest, they are asking me not to take their ordination at their own valuation of it, but to deny everything which makes my ordination valuable or significant to me. In this direction there is no way out. But there is a way out, and we have not far to go to find it. It is open as soon as we can say to each other: 'I admit what you say about your ordination, and you admit what I say about mine. Under the same name, *ordination*, we have received quite different things. The Free Churchmen have received a recognition of an existing gift of God. The Churchmen of the historic Churches have received a commission with a new gift of God for its performance. The first step towards having a common and universally accepted ministry, is that we should each receive the ordination which we have not had: the Free Churchmen the commission from those who have received a commission to give it, the churchmen of the historic Churches the recognition which opens the way to them to exercise their ministry for and among Free Churchmen.'

It may well have been the leading of the Spirit of God which has made Free Churchmen interpret their ordination as they do. The Spirit did not allow them to claim to give the commission which He has willed should pass

through the hands of a succession of persons who are commissioned to give it. I believe fully that God did raise up many men who have been able ministers of the Word, and the Free Churches rightly recognised them as such, and I recognise them as such. I do not think that it was a true inference that therefore these men were entitled to do everything else in the Church, to minister the Sacraments and to rule the Church (so far as ministers rule it). By drawing that inference and acting upon it, the Free Churches threw away one divinely appointed bond of unity, and greatly increased the divisive forces which the Puritan theory of Church membership always introduces wherever it is accepted.

The position of the Great Church about Holy Orders, as I believe it to be, centres round two points: (1) the Divine Commission is the one essential of Orders, and for the normal, local ministry, it is conveyed by persons who have been authorised to convey it; (2) this Divine Commission is not general, but particular, that is, there is not a general ministry, but a differentiated ministry ('are all Apostles?' as S. Paul says). I believe that these principles have ruled the lines of the permanent framework of the Universal Church. I believe that this framework is wide enough to include every grace that has ever been poured out on any Free Church minister and to give it free course. I believe that the undoubted graces and powers of Free Church ministers represent the refusal of God to be defeated by evil men and evil times, but the outpouring of these graces and powers does not show that God intended the ministry of His Church to have an indefinite number of sources unconnected with each other, from any of which it can at any time rise up and start afresh, as a separate stream. I believe that the origin of the regular ministry of the Church is from Christ and His Apostles, and by this regular ministry, derived from that one source, the Church is intended to be kept together.

Additional Note to Chapter VIII, page 129

Ignatius may have meant more The Apostles alone were at the Last Supper. The words, 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' most naturally mean '*Do what I am doing.*' The Minister of the Eucharist does take the part of Christ in what is primarily a re-enactment of the Last Supper. He says the most solemn words in the character of Christ (*in persona Christi*, as Thomas Aquinas writes). Ignatius several times compares the Bishop to Christ and the Presbyters to the Apostles (e.g., *ad. Trall*, 2, 3). So he may mean here (*Ad Smyrn.* 8) that a Eucharist will be duly celebrated when the Bishop, Christ's representative, presides, or when a Presbyter presides, to whom the Bishop has committed that duty, as Christ committed it to the Apostles.

We may notice a more important point. Why has the Church insisted far more strongly on having a priest for the minister of the Eucharist than for the minister of Baptism? Because the former is 'taking the part of Christ,' the latter is not. Christ Himself did not baptise (John iv. 1, 2). His own action made the Eucharist. To 'take the part' of the Lord in the Lord's Supper, a man must be His specially commissioned representative.

Note on the Bampton Lectures of 1920

Dr. Headlam's Bampton Lectures only came into my hands after this book was already in type. The position which he takes up about the succession from consecrator to consecrated and ordainer to ordained will appear to many readers to traverse some parts of my argument. It is worth while to state here summarily the extent to which we are at issue. The position taken in the present work is (*a*) that such a succession of persons holding and receiving one from another an exclusive commission to ordain existed in fact in the Gentile Churches from the very first, and that this system of ordination became the norm of the universal Church; (*b*) that this system symbolises and means that the authority

of the minister does not proceed from the contemporary Church on earth or from any part of it, but from Christ the Head, for whom each Apostle and Bishop acts by commission; (*c*) that this system has incidentally been found to be a strong support of unity. Dr. Headlam's article on Apostolical Succession in the 'Prayer Book Dictionary' comes to very much the same conclusion as (*a*). His 'Bampton Lectures' strongly insist on (*c*). But those lectures argue further (1) that Irenaeus, Eusebius, and the early Church generally meant, by succession from the Apostles, *the succession in office* of the Bishops in the sees which Apostles founded and later in sees founded by Bishops of those sees. This is true and well known, and probably settles the meaning of the words 'Apostolic Church' in the Creed. I fully admit the importance of this succession in office. It is the formal or external aspect of the *succession in function*, which is the chief contention of my sixth chapter. But it does not disprove the existence in fact of another sort of succession from the Apostles. (2) That the succession from ordainer to ordained and consecrator to consecrated is not referred to 'in any authoritative document of any portion of the Catholic Church' (p. 267), and therefore the 'doctrine' of such a succession cannot be made a condition of Reunion. I am not here concerned with terms of Reunion. All I demand is that, if, as I have endeavoured to show, this 'doctrine' is true and important, I may be allowed to believe and teach it in the reunited Church. (3) This 'doctrine' of the succession from ordainer to ordained and consecrator to consecrated is said by Dr. Headlam to be 'untrue to history,' because it is not formulated, nor is attention called to it, till at any rate after the Reformation. My case is that this succession itself is a fact of history. What is called the doctrine of the succession is an interpretation of the fact. We may grant that this interpretation cannot lay claim to antiquity. But is it therefore 'untrue to history'? Still more important, is it therefore untrue in itself? Remember Galileo. Or remember a theological instance. No orthodox Christian ever spoke of God as a person, or attributed personality to God till the eighteenth century, and such language can hardly be found among heretics till the sixteenth century.

Will any reader say that the late date of the formulation of the doctrine of the personality of God shows that it is untrue? (4) Dr. Headlam denounces the 'doctrine' of the succession of persons commissioned to ordain as mechanical and magical.' Each reader must judge for himself whether these epithets are deserved by the doctrine as I have stated it.

For these reasons I submit that Dr. Headlam's arguments have not put out of court the position taken up in this book.

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